DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 460 253 CE 071 129

AUTHOR	Shohet, Linda, Ed.
TITLE	Literacy across the Curriculum: Connecting Literacy in the Schools, Community and Workplace, 1995-1996.
INSTITUTION	Centre for Literacy, Montreal (Quebec).
SPONS AGENCY	National Literacy Secretariat, Ottawa (Ontario).; Human Resources Development Canada, Ottawa (Ontario).; Dawson Coll., Montreal (Quebec).
ISSN	ISSN-1192-3288
PUB DATE	1996-00-00
NOTE	114p.; Includes "Media Focus" Volume 5, Numbers 1-4.
AVAILABLE FROM	Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec H3Z 1A4, Canada.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Literacy across the Curriculum; v11 n1-4 Spr 1995-Win 1996
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; *Educational Research; *Educational Resources; Educational Technology; Foreign Countries; Instructional Materials; *Literacy Education; Reading Instruction; Research Reports; Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS	Canada; *Media Education

ABSTRACT

This document contains four issues of a journal that aims to connect literacy in the schools, the community, and the workplace. Each issue also contains an insert focusing on media literacy. Some of the topics covered in the spring 1995 issue include the following: positioning literacy--naming literacy; literacy and machines--an overview of the use of technology in adult literacy programs; the United Kingdom experience of workplace literacy; families and literacy; writing and roadkill on the information highway; surfing the net in pursuit of the muse; turned off, tuned out--left out (television); what do employers really want?; and what adults need to know and be able to do. The summer 1995 issue features the following: health and literacy; the United Kingdom experience of investing in people; work-based learning; the new reading disk; computer technology survey of Ontario adult literacy programs; David Buckingham on media literacy; Spain 1995--International Conference on Media Education; Prime Time Parent Media Literacy workshop kit; policy conversation on new technologies and literacy; and adult literacy software evaluation criteria. In the Fall 1995 issue, the following are addressed: knowing more, doing less; international comparison of adult literacy released; what happens to kids with learning disabilities when they grow up?; inquiry projects and inquiry maps; participatory action research; making peace with the media; media education in English Quebec--an overview; and substance abuse and media education. The Winter 1996 issue includes the following: participation and the pleasure principle (of literacy education); a grammar of the visual?; literacy and technology--trying to reach adults where they are; evaluating television for teaching literacy; and adult literacy media alliance; poetry lessons for literacy--conversation poems; assessing media work; and New York City's public schools get support for critical media use in the information age. All issues include teaching methods, resources, reviews, conference notes, and announcements. (KC)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 460 253

Literacy across the Curriculum: Connecting Literacy in the Schools, Community and Workplace, 1995-1996

Linda Shohet, Editor

Volume 11, Numbers 1-4

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

L. Shohet

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

CE 071 129

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SPRING 1995 Vol. 11 No. 1

Literacy across the curriculum

including Media Focus

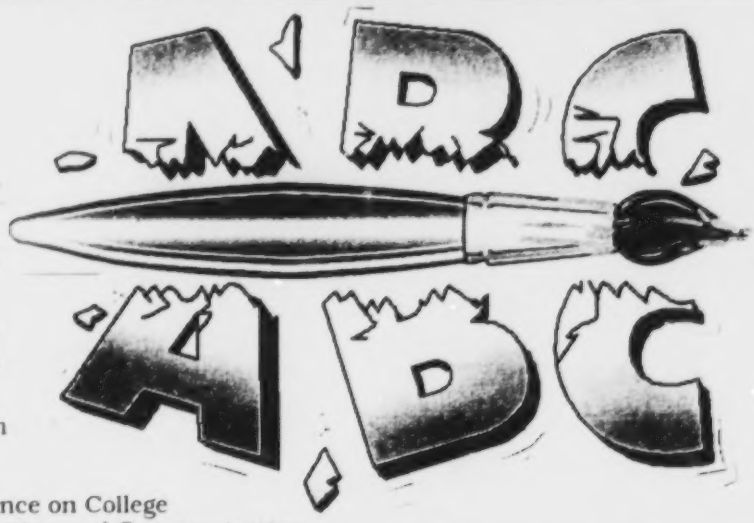
Connecting literacy in the schools, community and workplace

Naming literacy – Positioning literacy

Have we extended the meaning of literacy so far in the past 15 years that it is in danger of becoming devoid of meaning? Gunther Kress thinks so.

Professor of Education at the University of London's Institute of Education, Kress is a developer of critical linguistics, best known in academic circles for his work on childrens' reading and genre theory. But it is his current work on literacy and what he calls "multimodal" text that should win him a following among a much broader audience.

He believes that using the term literacy as a metaphor to describe something that seems to mean "not much more than (competence in) some form of culturally significant behaviour" [see BOX 1] has caused us to lose the literal meaning of the word [see BOX 2] and to blur or misconstrue the questions connected to it.



The turn of the visual

Kress spoke in March at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Washington D.C. He talked about the displacement of writing from its central position in communication as technology, globalization and multicultural social realities intensify the "turn of the visual." To illustrate his point, Kress used three examples, comparing two children's books, two science textbooks and two newspapers.

The children's books were a British Ladybird story and a Dick Bruna book from Holland. The Ladybird story carried the text on

continued on page 2

INSIDE

4 To ponder
5 Literacy and machines
6 Positioning literacy – The U.K. experience
10 In the classroom: Families and literacy
12 What do employers really want?
14 What adults need to know
15 Resources: ALBSU materials
16 Conferences
18 Announcements

The Centre for Literacy Montreal, Quebec

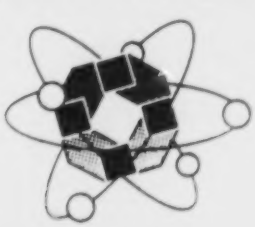
Literacy Across the Curriculum

The Centre for Literacy
3040 Sherbrooke Street West,
Montreal, Quebec,
Canada,
H3Z 1A4

Editor: Linda Shohet
Layout & design: Pon©tu@t!on GRAFIX

Dépot légal – 1991
ISSN 1192-3288
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

The Centre for Literacy/Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.



Literacy for the 21st century
Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

continued from page 1

the left side and the image on the right: the language tells the reader how to see the world. The Bruna book was entirely illustration around which readers can tell stories depending on where they stand: here, the unifying principle resides in the image. Kress contextualized this example by noting that the Dutch from the time they introduced radio in Holland gave air time to many cultural groups while the British from the beginning of broadcasting established the BBC as the official national standard of language and interpretation. Texts in the two countries reflect those cultural positions.

Now the shift to the visual seen in Dick Bruna has spread. Comparing traditional and tabloid newspapers, we find that language has shrunk and graphics/images carry more of the meaning. Science textbooks provide another example. Until the 1960s, language was the

BOX 1

The problem of literacy as a metaphor

This metaphoric extension facilitates a rapid move from a concern with the detail of the formal aspects of literacy to a consideration of its uses and effects...It mirrors precisely the shift from the lettered person as the possessor of specific linguistic/cultural skills to the homme cultivé as the possessor of a broad range of desirable cultural attitudes.

... The slippage between linguistic and cultural meanings can have the political effect that cultural values and social practices which are seen as undesirable are attacked under the guise of an attack on literacy standards.

Differentiating writing and reading

Writing is the production of a text which exists potentially for many readers; the text establishes the domain, 'sets the agenda,' for the reader's engagement with the text. While that does not determine the specific readings of the text...it does determine the ground on which reading takes place. Reading is the production of a text for one reader, the self, in a response to a text which both establishes the domain, and attempts to structure its reception. The political potential of writing and reading are...radically distinct; and to gloss over that distinction in contemporary approaches to reading or to literacy seems to me a fundamental political and social problem. In my view, it amounts to a spurious empowerment of those who are readers, in the name of democratic, egalitarian social structures, while leaving real power unchallenged with those who have the means for the production of texts for many, who have full control of the technology of literacy.

Gunther Kress, "Questions in a social theory of literacy," *Learning to Write*, Routledge, (London/New York1994): pp. 194-195 & 197-198.

central medium for carrying the information with images as illustration. Today, image is central and language is comment. Kress suggests this is a reflection of science having lost its sense of who it is addressing in the classroom.

Back to a literal meaning

Kress does not see these trends as "the end of civilization." A fuller account of his thinking is given in the second edition of his book *Learning to Read* where he has added a critical chapter entitled "Questions in a social theory of literacy." He calls for a return to precision in talking about literacy that distinguishes between verbal and written representations and other representations of meaning such as drawing, music, dance. He also wants to reestablish the fundamental distinction between reading and writing which have been blurred as the terms have been replaced by the word "literacy." [see BOX 2] From this reassessment follows a changed pedagogy in schools and a changed politics of workplace and community literacy.

Kress has deep convictions about the power of [literal] literacy to produce "a culture of innovation" which he believes is essential for our survival in a rapidly changing world of technology and information.

Issues arising

Kress's analysis provides me with a frame for discussing a recent study tour in the U.K. where I spent a week with four Canadian colleagues meeting researchers, policy-makers and practitioners at the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) and visiting workplace and community-based program sites.

This issue of *LAC* contains reports and observations on that visit with a focus on the way that literacy/basic skills has been positioned on the British social and political agenda (pp. 6-9). It also has excerpts from some current reports from Canada and the U.S.which indicate trends related to school, work and basic skills, some of them contradictory to each other (pp. 12-14). With the exception of New Brunswick, there is no place in Canada where literacy/basic skills has been incorporated into the social vision beyond rhetoric. Without that deeper analysis and political action, it is more than possible that literacy could literally fall off the agenda entirely within two years in most parts of this country. [LS]

BOX 2

'What is literacy?'

For a start I wish to make a distinction between verbal literacy on the one hand, and literacy as a description of any form or means of representation – 'media literacy' 'computer literacy'– and, more decisively, as a word describing 'cultured' aspects of human practices –'cultural literacy', 'moral literacy' – on the other hand. Equally I wish to rule out the plural form 'literacies' for the moment. This leaves 'literacy' as a word which describes one aspect of human communication, namely the form of representation through language of socio-cultural meanings and in which language is represented visually by means of letters and associated graphic signs.

Gunther Kress, "Questions in a social theory of literacy," *Learning to Write*, Routledge, (London/New York1994): 209.

BOX 3

The multi-modality of literacy

... no message ever appears in one mode. Written language inevitably involves the medium of typography, or of handwriting, and the medium of layout. Further, writing has to appear on or with a medium – paper, stone, textile, a rockface, a marble slab. The medium with which language appears inevitably adds its meaning: the brass plate on which a business's name appears adds a different menaing to that of a cheaply printed plastic sign. If the name appears on paper, the quality of the paper, for instance, becomes a semiotic medium so that 'good quality paper' or 'glossy paper' add meaning to the verbal text willy-nilly. Multi-modality is an unavoidable condition of verbal literacy in its appearance in text as message.

Gunther Kress, "Questions in a social theory of literacy," *Learning to Write*, Routledge, (London/New York1994): 211.

1 On poetry and software

What has poetry to do with computer software? They share a great human myth or trope, an image that could be called the secret passage: the discovery of large, manifold channels through a small, ordinary looking or all but invisible aperture.

Pressed to define the special attributes of poetry as an art, I would name speed and memory. Whipping from image to abstraction, from narrative to reflection, from neat epigram to sensuous trope, poetry can cross terrain and change direction with tremendous swiftness. Compared to ordinary language, it can be like ice-skating compared to walking. (Discursive prose, to extend the comparison a bit mischievously, often resembles wading staright ahead.) And the effort to enlarge memory — to recall genealogy or history, for example — is the most obvious source for the development of verse.

Speed and memory: these qualities link poetry with the computer...

...

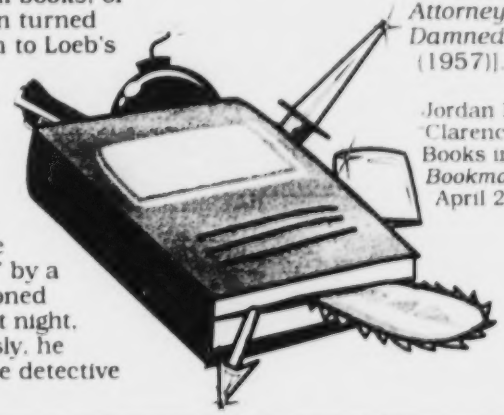
This fascination with the tremendous volume that can be indicated or stored in a tiny space is an essential element of our pleasure in lyric poetry. That the same principle also has something to do with the pleasures of the personal computer is suggested by the way the idea persists not only in Zork descendants like the currently popular Myst, which is full of concealed doorways leading to vast mazes. The same principle comes into play when the anonymous diskette opens up into the unfolding universe of popular, semiserious programs like the city-planning game Simcity or the history game Civilization.

The pleasure in these realms is like that of living with a poem: say, the 237 words of William Butler Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" or the mere 96 words of Blake's "London" (My computer counted the words for me.) Reciting the poem, repeating it, memorizing it, meditating it, we play with it and work at it for the pleasure of feeling it unfold to millions of times the original size. This sense of effort to see more governs the interactive text on the monitor, too: the reader-user applies herself to see the text expand. This is the opposite of cant about the "freedom" readers have when dealing with interactive texts: it is the freedom of the detective trying to solve a crime, or the captive trying to escape, a kind of authorial tyranny compared with the welcoming, available pages of a book.

Robert Pinsky, "The Muse in the Machine: Or, The Poetics of Zork," *The New York Times Book Review*, March 19, 1995, pp 3, 27.

2 On books and violence

Darrow even used his love of books and their influence in court. In defending Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold, he first noted Leopold's philosopical dependency upon the theories of Friedrich Nietzsche (derived from books, of course), then turned his attention to Loeb's reading habits. While a young boy, Darrow contended, Loeb was force-fed the "best books" by a well-intentioned governess. At night, surreptitiously, he devoured the detective stories she forbade. The result was the creation by Loeb of his fantasy to perpetuate the perfect crime — "The books he read by day were not the books he read by night...Which, think you, shaped the life of Dickie Loeb? Is there any kind of question about it?...these books became a part of his dreams and a part of his life, and as he grew up his visions grew to hallucinations...to complete the perfect crime. Can there be any question about it?" (Quoted in Arthur Weinberg (ed.), *Clarence Darrow, Attorney for the Damned*, pp. 63-64 (1957)].



Jordan D. Luttrell, "Clarence Darrow and the Books in His Life," *AB Bookman's Weekly*, April 24, 1995, 1805.

Literacy and machines: An overview of the use of technology in adult literacy programs

[The National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL) in Philadelphia is disseminating current research findings in a new format called NCAL Briefs. These briefs summarize recently published reports including research findings, implications and recommendations, and information on how to order the complete report. Reprinted here with permisson are excerpts from "Literacy and Machines: An Overview of the Use of Technology in Adult Literacy Programs," a Brief released on March 10, 1995, prepared by Terilyn Turner of Saint Paul Lifelong Literacy and based on NCAL Technical Report TR93-03, March 1993, $9.00 (ERIC no. ED356 408) (ed.)]

Key Findings:

- The value of technology for adult literacy instruction is based on its provision of privacy, individual control, immediate feedback, and flexibility for learners.
- The selection of appropriate technology must take into account the larger themes and issues currently debated in adult literacy, such as the nature of the learner, purpose of literacy instruction, and issues of evaluation and accountability.
- Context should be the primary determinant for appropriate technology selection since there are marked differences among the programs for work force literacy, family literacy, adult basic education, GED, corrections, libraries, and English as a second language.
- The use of technology in adult literacy programs is enhanced or limited by philosopical and historic traditions within the literacy field. An understanding of these traditions facilitates technology decision making and places the decision in a larger context.
- As issues of access and equity are debated in the fields of literacy and technology, practitioners need to provide leadership in determining the future of technology in the adult literacy field.

Key recommendations:

- Technology selection should be based on a previously identified need or problem within the literacy program, and instructional software should be selected for its ability to address that specific gap in the curriculum.
- Practitioners need to teach adult learners how to access information rather than sound out words; technology becomes the means by which information and knowledge can be acquired.

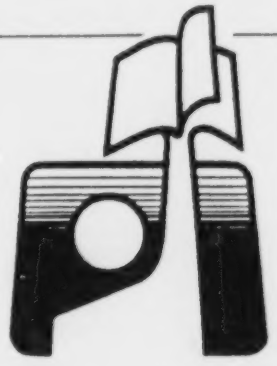
To order hard copies of this full report or other NCAL reports, call NCAL Dissemination (215) 898-2100; Fax: (215) 898-9804, e-mail: **ncal@literacy.upenn.edu.**

Free electronic copy of the brief: via NCAL's Internet Gopher, point your client at **litserver.literacy.upenn.edu.**

Alternatives for Literacy: Technology for Today and Tomorrow

Adult Literacy and Technology Conference
August 4 - 5, 1995
Philadelphia, PA

Information: Tom Andrzejewski or Chris Hopey, National Center on Adult Literacy, Tel: (215) 898-2100; Fax: (215) 898-9804; e-mail: andrzejewski@literacy.upenn.edu or hopey@literacy.upenn.edu



Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

Integrating basic skills

Education in the U.K. has turned into a battlefield according to Gunther Kress with competing visions of literacy fueling the fight in the schools and in the workplace. Further education colleges are no longer overseen by local education authorities and competency-based assessment is taking hold in vocational training. But despite all the contention, the U.K. has still moved further in integrating literacy/basic skills into larger political and social agendas than other Western countries have.

According to Alan Wells, founder and director of the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU), the agency has more status today than it did five years ago. Wells, who finds the word "literacy" problematic, would like to see it dropped from the agency's name. They use the term "basic skills" and are moving towards "core skills." Nevertheless, by commissioning research that makes links between basic skills and employment, health, housing and a variety of other social issues, ALBSU has succeeded in positioning "basic skills" as a necessary foundation for further education and retraining and for social reform.

The downside of the shift is that ALBSU has moved further from students and practitioners, aligning itself with the policy-makers and administrators who quantify whatever can be translated into numbers and constantly call for accountability. Wells argues that the climate of the times is such that without that move, literacy would have been lost as an issue on the national agenda by now. Nobody funds " good feelings" in 1995. They want outcomes.

To its credit, building on the data it collects, ALBSU has created a coherent vision, written clear-language reports, produced national instructor training certification and curricula and developed an inventory of foundational skills that cut across school and workplace; it has created some high-profile demonstration projects, devised program quality marks, and engaged in multi-agency consulting (partnerships in North American terms) which have integrated basic skills into contexts they would not otherwise have been.

Two examples illustrate the way in which basic skills have been integrated into housing and health. Using census data, ALBSU has shown connections between poor skills and inadequate housing, low income and poor health. Other agencies are using their findings.

Housing and basic skills

A major regeneration project being carried out over ten years at one of the largest housing estates (British for slum) in England has included education and training for tenants in its plan. It will see concrete highrises torn down and replaced by self-contained townhouses similar to those that existed before the 1950s. Recognizing the lack of basic skills among the tenants, the housing corporation has built in educational assessment, basic skills and vocational training. For those who take up the offer, the corporation is committed to hiring 75% of the project workers from the estate. The years of work experience is expected to wean them off welfare dependency and make them employable after the project ends. The motivation is the building of their own homes as well as their futures.

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

Health and basic skills

In Norwich, an East Anglian city in the county of Norfolk, Healthy Norfolk 2000 was launched in 1990 to improve the health and well-being of Norfolk residents, to reduce inequalities in health and to encourage co-operation among all organizations with a responsibility for health. A basic skills consultant is involved in every initiative.

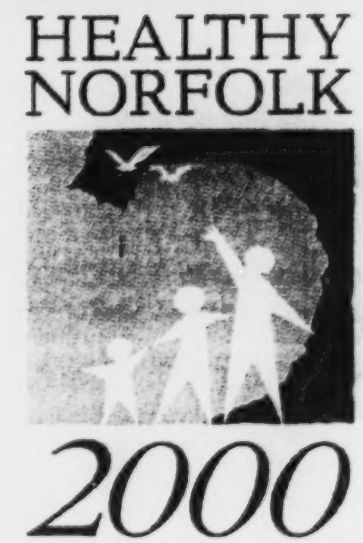
Having experienced a false start in 1988, the project started anew in 1992 to build multi-agency cooperation around six key targets in health of particular import to Norfolk: Cancer, Heart Health, Sexual Health, Accidents, Food Poisoning and Disabilities. The project also supports initiatives apart from Healthy Norfolk 2000, such as a program in the town of Thetford which has held public focus groups to get at health concerns by posing a more general question: What is it like to live in Thetford? From transcripts of recorded responses, planners have identified patterns and issues and created a clear, concise document identifying the citizens' concerns related to health, the agencies that might respond, the projects/changes that could be undertaken and the commitment required from key players to carry out particular actions. The emphasis is on eliminating duplication/turf wars and redirecting those resources to new targets.

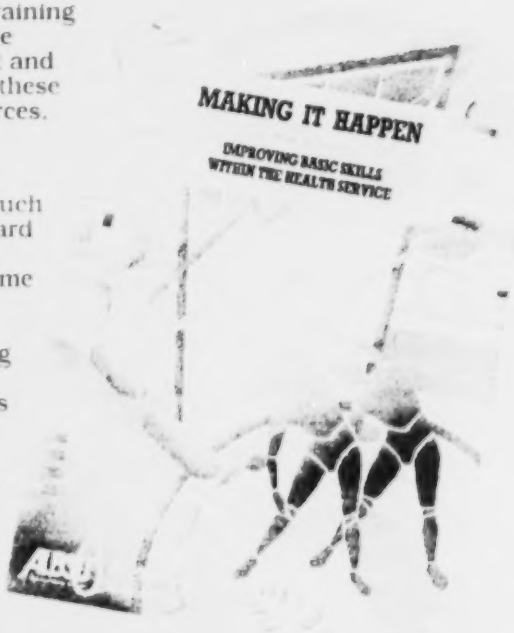
Literacy/basic skills is constantly addressed. There is awareness that client groups may have comprehension or communication problems and that materials and oral presentations must be written or made clearly and graphically. A bonus has been that highly literate but busy people have also taken the time to read materials they might otherwise have ignored.

Assessment is a concern at all levels. In these projects, recognizing the impossibility of measuring short-term gains in health in a long-term project, planners have wisely built in qualitative measures such as number of schools, organizations visited or contacted, numbers of referrals, calls, materials distributed, etc., concentrating on output rather than impact in the early stages.

The Health Promotion Unit in Norwich focuses on health education in the schools and the community. They develop curriculum, consult and design and rewrite documents for ease of reading. They have worked in health-education partnerships, drawing in advice from all parties involved. Step-to-Health, another HN2000 project, provides training and resources to help people change their lifestyles – diet and prevention, smoking. All of these projects have limited resources.

In addition to these larger initiatives, there are many smaller integrated efforts, such as the presence of Dr. Richard Redding, a community pediatrician in a lower-income area nursery school. The nursery happens to be located in the same building as the local family literacy project and Dr. Redding has a high level of awareness that the parents of the children he sees often have severe basic skills problems. He has accommodated his talk and materials to reduce the anxiety and increase the comprehension of these parents.





Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

Workplace basic skills-two British companies

Colman's of Norwich
Ford's Dagenham

The ALBSU Basic Skills at Work Programme (1992-95) established 40 pilot-projects involving 300 companies. With ALBSU funding now ended, about 70% of the projects are continuing with funding from other sources according to ALBSU project officers.

In England, I visited two of the companies, radically different in organizational structure, which are committed to maintaining basic skills as part of their workplace education program.

A benevolent employer

Colman's of Norwich is the condiment and soft drink division of Colman's & Reckitt. Founded by the Quaker Colman family, it is now part of a multinational conglomerate, currently for sale to help finance a £ billion acquisition in North America. Laid out on a sprawling, landscaped estate in Norwich that previously housed the Colman family home, the low-slung factory buildings are connected by gardens and stone walking-paths. The training/education program is housed in a converted abbey on the property.

Having been "down-sized" in recent years as the consequence of technology and globalization, the company currently employs about 700 local residents with little turnover; it has inherited the Quaker philosophy of benevolence toward employees. According to their director of training, Peter Leggett, basic skills needs became apparent with the changes in technology and organization; at the time, Colman's assessed all the employees and provided individual feedback with the option to take basic skills upgrading. As employees have recognized the increased demands, many have been motivated to take the option. Four trainers at the company have become certified ALBSU instructors who offer small-group classes and, for those employees who want confidentiality, one-on-one tuition.

Colman's takes the long-term view that the increased confidence and self-esteem of workers who achieve qualification benefit the company in both direct and indirect ways – the workers are able to participate in new team structures and they feel less threatened by the continuing changes. The company anticipates that within a few years, they will no longer need ALBSU consultancy and will take full responsibility for basic skills provisions within the company's training program.

Robots at Ford

Ford's Dagenham, in contrast to Colman's, is located on a barren expanse, almost the size of central London, on the edge of a working class suburb which provides most of the 9000 employees who work in three connected plants. While Ford used to be managed in each country where they manufactured, now all management is centralized in Detroit and quality standards are global.

Dagenham, producer of Fiestas and a van, is in the midst of technological reorganization; robots have replaced workers in the most tedious and physically demanding tasks. Many workstations are monitored by computer.

The changes are most evident on the die presses which cut out large pieces of the cars. At one point, standing between two production lines with our host, we were told "You are standing between the past and the future." On the left, each section of the massive presses was manned by 1-2 employees, a total of about 15 per line. On the right, highly sensitive robots were carrying out the identical tasks - with one employee at the head and one at the end reading printouts on a screen. The repetitive movements were mind-numbing, the noise deafening. At first, it seemed reasonable to use machines instead of men. Yet the hidden

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

questions never arose – all the workers clearly need more training, but where do the displaced workers go? Here, too, the workforce is shrinking, the level of demand rising, and no one in management talks about those who are no longer there.

Ford has a history of employee training and support. The employee Development Assistance Program (EDAP) is the centre for all non-work related education offered to every employee and subsidized up to £200/year. About 20% of employees avail themselves of the offer. This training includes all leisure activity as well as more formal options, none of it work related.

Basic Skills has been located in this building in the form of an Open Learning Centre with one-on-one tuition and self-paced programs. The centre is called "Off-Line."

Sue Southwood, the project officer, spends much of her time "selling" the program on the floor. Her long-term hope is that it will eventually be integrated into the company's formal work-related training. In the meantime, workers are invited to see this program as a way of easing their transition to team-based work organization.

There is some resistance from supervisors and some reluctance from some of the workers, but a tri-partite committee of union, management and providers is pleased with the initial results. While Southwood had hoped for more participation more quickly, a union steward, who has been at the plant for 19 years, thinks they have come far. He understands that unions have to change with the new structures and reconceptualize their roles. Worker education is one goal shared by union and management and one of the few issues on which they have agreed without a prolonged struggle.

At both companies, people referred to a national campaign to sensitize employers to the educational and training needs of their employees. Called "Investors in People," it is attempting to change the culture of the country. These two companies attest to the beginning of that change.

The other side of the picture

As in other industrialized countries, there is an ongoing struggle to have literacy and basic skills recognized as a necessity and responsibility by employers. Colman's and Ford are by no means the rule.

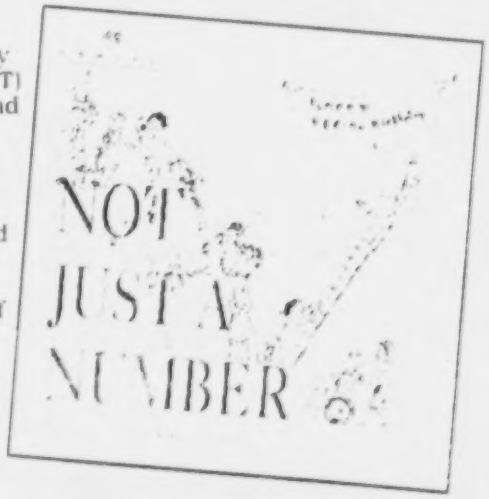
A study entitled *"Not Just a Number": The Role of Basic Skills Programmes in the Changing Workplace* from Lancaster University's Center for the Study of Education and Training (CSET) provides an excellent background on the issue.

Researchers Fiona Frank and Mary Hamilton, well-known for their work in literacy, conducted an employer survey in the early 1990s in the North West of England to ascertain the level of awareness of the problem, the recognition of need and responsibility, and the degree of familiarity with available resources. The report is a well-written documentation of the process and a thoughtful and questioning analysis of the results, extrapolated from the region to the whole country. It also contains an excellent historical backgrounder on worker education in England and an international bibliography.

Frank and Hamilton at the same time collected writings from workers who were enrolled in programs and published these as a text with the first part of the shared title – *Not Just a Number*. It can used in a class as readings or read as a foil to the study itself. [LS]

ALBSU documents can be ordered from: Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, 7th Floor Commonwealth House, 1 - 19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NU.

The CSET report can be ordered from: CSET, Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK, LA1 4YL. Tel: 0524 592679; Fax: 0524 844788. Cost is £8.50 plus £2 p&p
Writings about workplace learning, £3.50 plus p&p.



Families and literacy: Types and uses of reading and writing

Excerpts from notes from Denny Taylor, University of Arizona, presented at The Canadian Conference on Family Literacy, November 1994, Ottawa. The Conference report is now available.

Literacy Configurations

Each one of us has a literacy configuration as unique as our thumbprint. The literacy configurations of our families are also unique. No two families have the same literacy configuration. And yet, there are similarities, overarching frameworks that shape the ways in which we use literacy in everyday life. I want to encourage you to shift your lens from world to word view and vice versa to discover the patterns of literacy practices that are a part of our everyday lives. What follows are notes. I'm still expanding, rethinking. Help me out. Add to the framework or create a different framework. [D.T.]

World

You might begin by asking how print is used in the society in which we live? How is it used in other societies with which we are familiar? [Look at newspaper headlines.] Who writes these texts? Who reads them? Who interprets them? What (who) influences the reading, writing and interpretation of such texts? Who is included? Who is excluded? How can we characterize the print that is a part of our everyday lives

[The following types and uses of reading and writing in everyday life have been observed by Denny Taylor in ethnographic studies of family literacy. The examples are not exhaustive but do illustrate how subtly reading and writng are entwined in modern living, often taken for granted and unremarked. Taylor invites practitioners to adapt this framework or create their own.]

Reading

- **Confirmational: "What time is my appointment at the dentist?"**
  Reading to check or confirm facts or beliefs, often from archival materials stored and retrieved only on special occasions.
- **Educational: "I've gotta read chapter three in my history book by Friday."**
  Reading to fulfill the educational requirements of schooling. Reading to increase one's ability to consider and/or discuss political, social, aesthetic, or religious knowledge. Reading to educate oneself.
- **Environmental: "Stop! There's the sign for Air Canada."**
  Reading the print in the environment – on highways, in airports, at the supermarket, in restaurants.
- **Financial: "I can't work out what I wrote in my checkbook!"**
  Reading to consider (and sometimes make changes to) the economic circumstances of one's everyday life. Reading to fulfill practical (financial) needs of everyday life.
- **Historical: "I'm reading a book about the place where my parents were born."**
  Reading to explore one's personal identity. Reading to explore the social, political and economic circumstances of one's everyday life. Reading conserved writings that create a permanent record of one's family life history.
- **Instrumental: "Oh no! My dental appointment is at the same time as my doctor's appointment!"**
  Reading to gain information for meeting practical needs, dealing with public agencies and scheduling daily life.
- **Interactional: "Happy birthday! I love you."**
  Reading to gain information pertinent to building and maintaining social relationships.
- **News Related: "Have you read about this new sales tax?"**
  Reading to gain information about third parties. Reading to gain information about local, state and national events.
- **Recreational: "I just read about the Mercer Street Grill. Let's eat there Saturday."**
  Reading during leisure time or in planning for recreational events.
- **Scientific: "Fractals are so complicated!"**
- **Technical: "I've been reading about the superhighway. Help me get onto E-Mail?"**
  Reading to gain information using the different symbolic forms of technological communications (computer, fax, virtual reality). Reading to advance one's understandings of the functions of such technologies.

VOL 5 No. 1 SPRING 1995

Media Focus

THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY

Writing and roadkill on the information Highway

It is not the Internet or the computer that are the real problems – it is the information which sometimes reflects a breakdown of society. This is not a new phenomenon, as every new technology tends to heighten a perception that society is in a state of breakdown, according to Dr. Stephen Marcus, from University of California, Santa Barbara. Marcus coordinates the National Writing Project Technology Network and is Chair of the Committee on Future Technologies for the International Society for Technology and Education.

During a one-day interactive workshop at The Centre for Literacy on April 29, 1995, Dr. Marcus examined the problems and promise of telecommunications in educational settings. He invited workshop participants with some experience to share and develop new teaching methods. The familiar debate concerning the medium and the message wove its way into the conversation throughout the day.

Marcus began by describing electronic mail as a hybrid. The medium looks familiar for it is print. However, it is quite different from what it appears. The difference lies in the fact that it combines print and speech, and that standards and practices for this combination of activities are still evolving.

Marcus involved participants in exercises which illustrated how they could improve their own as well as their students' e-mail skills. They were given a sheet of paper which was a mock-up of a computer screen and asked to compose an e-mail message to Marcus. The purpose of this very low-tech simulation was twofold. First, it was to provide the experience of writing e-mail and to reflect on what we write. "Telecommunications," Marcus noted, "is redefining what text is." He quoted Neil Postman. "There are important consequences to changing the form of information, its quality, its speed or its direction."

The second purpose of the exercise was to illustrate that e-mail messages do not always get to the people to whom they are being sent. This possibility raises issues of privacy, ethics and morals.

'Netiquette', cyberjargon for 'polite'

While standards for writing e-mail are still evolving, so is conventional wisdom about what is "good" e-mail. As a result there is a myriad of rules, many of which are constantly being violated and/or rewritten. Marcus reminded participants that standardization and rules are needed, for many e-mail users get excessive numbers of messages and reading them is time-consuming. It also jams mailboxes and takes up bandwith.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

Surfing the net in pursuit of the muse p. 5

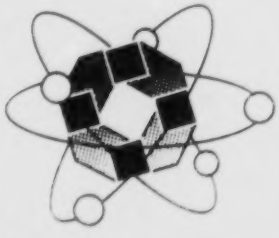
Review: Keys to interpreting media p. 8

Media Focus

is a supplement to **Literacy Across the Curriculum** published four times a year by **The Centre for Literacy, Inc.**
3040 Sherbrooke St. West,
Montreal, Quebec,
Canada. H3Z 1A4
Tel: (514) 931-8731, Ext:1415

Editor
Linda Shohet
Supplement editor
Judy Brandeis
Layout & design
Pon©tu@t!on GRAFIX

The Centre for Literacy/Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.



Literacy for the 21st century
Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The discussion about the importance of correct grammar and punctuation still goes on. Some feel they are not important in cyberspace, as attending to correctness slows down the process. Others disagree. However, Marcus feels that because visual cues are not there, the writing becomes even more important and the words must work to communicate the true sense of the message.

Dysfunctional behavior on the net

Marcus was candid about his ambivalence in dealing with what he termed "net dysfunctions." Some of his colleagues choose not to discuss the topic at all, fearing that focusing on these behaviours will intimidate potential users. He did, however, touch on some of the disturbing issues.

Marcus showed a series of short videos to elaborate on several other net dysfunctions. [See BOX p.3]

Marcus indicated that steps can be taken to educate people and had strong messages for parents and police. He warned parents against using the computer as a babysitter and appealed to police to gain a better understanding of computers and their impact. In general, he recommended public awareness programs carefully designed to provide information without suggesting that computers are a bad thing.

Is anybody out there?

Marcus confirmed that people often do not intend the information they send to be taken seriously. Many often lose the sense that there are actually people at the other end of the complex system. Once again he urged parents to get involved and to supervise their children's on-line habits.

Behaviour in cyberspace often brings out the worst in people, Marcus cautioned. The anonymity of the medium can provide a mask for some. Marcus noted that often people who do not illustrate certain forms of dysfunctional behavior in real life can do so on the net: those who *do* it in real life do it more on the net. This can affect the trust that people have in each other in the real world.

BOX

Elements of Style (e-mail update)

- Put the most important words in your Subject line early. Some systems (your reader's) truncate the text after 30 characters.
- The Subject line is not like the title of a paper. If possible, use it to tell the reader what to do, or at least have it accomplish something, not just be a brain teaser.
- Put the important material as early as possible in the message. If people have to read through more than one screen to get to the heart of the matter, you have already created an uphill battle for yourself.
- If you are sending unsolicited mail, precede your Subject listing with a question mark.
- If you are sending a piece of commercial mail (trying to sell something or asking for money), precede your Subject listing with a dollar sign.
- Practice good "netiquette." Do not say anything critical that you would not be willing to say face to face. (In e-mail lingo, do not "flame").
- Respect confidentiality. Do not forward or use someone else's e-mail without permission or credit.
- Do not use all capital letters for more than a few words or all lower case letters. You may be able to type faster that way, but both displays are hard to read. Retain a sense of your reader's needs.
- Use short lines and short paragraphs. Pay attention to how the screen looks.
- Do not overuse "smileys" (also known as emoticons). These are arrangements of typographic symbols that, when viewed sideways, look like faces that convey some emotion and are used to comment on or punctuate the content of the message. There are hundreds of these, and some can be fairly clever, but they can get tiring to decipher.
  Examples: :-) Happy :-o Shocked or Amazed :-/ Skeptical
- Follow familiar, traditional advice to keep your writing clear, active, to the point and correct. (See how *you* react to excessively sloppy e-mail text.)

Stephen Marcus. "Devising Writing in E-Mail." *The Quarterly* of the National Writing Project and The Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy. Vol. 117, No. 2, Spring 1995.

Marcus concluded with a reminder that gaining knowledge is like the apple in the Garden of Eden: it can be both good and evil. However, he reinforced the importance of remembering that when we log on to the Internet we are no longer dealing with the linear world – we are in cyberspace. He alerted participants to be on the watch for "People who turn their backs on the future, ignore the present and face the past with hope and determination." (JB)

Dr. Stephen Marcus has served on the National Software Advisory Board for Scholastic, Inc., and the Advisory Board of the Apple Education Foundation.

The Centre has a large collection of books and articles on technology, writing and the internet.

BOX

Net dysfunctions

I. **Flaming** - an e-mail message that uses highly derogatory, obscene or inappropriate language. Trolling – an attempt to start a "flame war" by posting in an otherwise civil discussion group (usually by someone who is looking around the net for groups to antagonize)

II. **Pornography** – "Telecommunications breaks down conventional notions of time and space," Marcus pointed out. "It makes it virtual." Herein lie some of the complex problems in dealing with pornography on-line Are you subject to the laws of the state/province where you live or where you are buying?

III. **Predators** – A video participants viewed confirmed that cyberspace can, in fact, be a haven for sexual deviants. Clearly, pedophiles are out there: the video alleged that a surprisingly large percent of Internet users fall into this category. The testimonies of both convicted cyberspace pedophiles and victims indicated that the common approach is for pedophiles to gain the trust of their victims then arrange to meet them.

IV. **Anarchy/Mayhem** – The bomb-making incident in Montreal in 1994 served as an illustration of this potential problem in cyberspace. Teenagers in Montreal who had accessed information about making bombs via the Internet went out and did so. Several were seriously injured as a result. Authors of this kind of information who were intereviewed reacted in a number of ways. Some showed no remorse and accepted no responsibility for taking care of other people's children. Free expression, they claimed, is their legal right: this includes expression on the Internet. Others were quite surprised that what they wrote had had such dire results. One author stated, "I never really thought anyone would take it seriously."

New video rating system in effect

The National Film Board reports that The Canadian Film and Home Video Industry's new video rating system, which went into effect May 1, 1995, is designed to provide consumers with uniform, national rating guidelines for renting home videos. Under the new system, the jacket of new video releases will display a sticker, colour-coded and shaped to conform to systems currently in use internationally. Consumers should be able to check stickers against in-store posters which provide information as to content and suitability of the video for their viewing purposes.

Information: Millard Roth, Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association, Tel: (416) 961-1888; or Chuck Van Der Lee, President, Rogers Home Video, Tel: (613) 270-9200.

G **General**
Suitable for viewing by all ages.

PG **Parental Guidance**
Parental guidance advised. Theme or content may not be suitable for all children.

14A **Adult Accompaniment**
Suitable for people 14 years of age or older. Those under 14 should view with an adult. No rental or purchase by those under 14. Parents cautioned. May contain: violence; coarse language; and/or sexually suggestive scenes.

18A **Adult Accompaniment**
Suitable for people 18 years of age or older. Persons under 18 should view with an adult. No rental or purchase by those under 18. Parents strongly cautioned. Will likely contain: explicit violence; frequent coarse language; sexual activity and/or horror.

R **Restricted**
Restricted to 18 years of age and over. No rental or purchase by those under 18. Content not suitable for minors. Video contains frequent use of: sexual activity; brutal/graphic violence; intense horror; and/or other disturbing content.

E **Exempt**
Contains material not subject to classification, e.g. documentaries, nature, travel, music, culture, sports and leisure, educational and instructional information.

Surfing the net in pursuit of the muse

Easier in theory than in practice

by Dorothy Nixon

About 25 administrators, elementary, secondary and post-secondary teachers gathered at Dawson College on March 27, 1995, for a panel discussion on *Who Will Teach the Teachers? New Technologies in the Classroom* sponsored by The Centre for Literacy and the Association of Teachers of English of Quebec (ATEQ) and the Academic Alliance of Teachers. Deborah Gross of the Ministry of Education, English Language Services moderated.

Scott Gardner of Concordia's Department of Communication Studies provided a broad theoretical framework for the discussion, while Judy Brandeis of The Centre for Literacy expressed her concern that the education sector was leaping over the broadcast and print media in its eagerness to use the computer as a teaching tool. Two Montreal private school teachers, Judith Schurmann of Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's and Jill Rollins, English Department Head at Trafalgar School, spoke from their experience about the pitfalls and potential of getting a classroom on-line.

On-line in the classroom

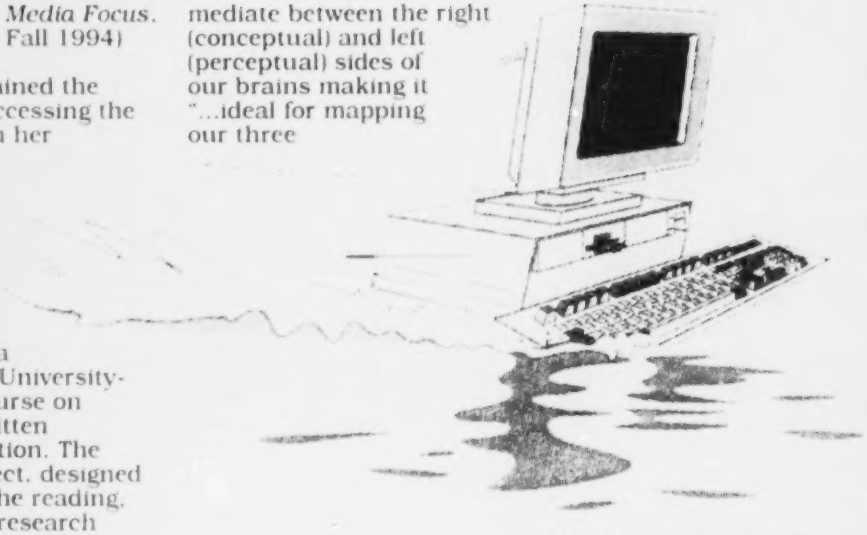
Schurmann described her Secondary V students' participation in a 70-school project sponsored by the Writers Development Trust, the Writers in Electronic Residence (WEIR) out of York University. The program links high school students across Canada with published Canadian writers. (See *Media Focus*, Vol. 4 No. 3, Fall 1994)

Rollins explained the process of accessing the Internet with her students in a joint McGill University-Trafalgar course on Effective Written Communication. The unique project, designed to improve the reading, writing and research skills of all students, involved teaming the Trafalgar participants with student "mentors" at the university. The Renaissance was chosen as a research topic "...in order to narrow things down a bit," said Rollins.

Meta-media – the new teacher

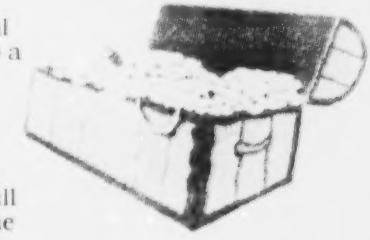
Gardner, a psychologist with an interest in the human impact of technology, elaborated enthusiastically about the enormous potential of multi-media as a teaching tool. He referred to it as "...the fourth generation of communications media with which we can, for the first time, both store and transmit information outside of the body." (The first generation of communications media is the spoken word; the second is print, where we store information outside our bodies; and the third is broadcast where we transmit information outside our bodies.)

Multi-media, or meta-media, as Gardner prefers to call it, can mediate between the right (conceptual) and left (perceptual) sides of our brains making it "...ideal for mapping our three dimensional brains onto a three dimensional world," he said. "After all, that's what we humans are always trying to do: create a full and accurate map of the world so we can feel at home in it."



And there is no real danger of multi-media rendering the earlier versions of communications media obsolete, he assured us. The bicycle did not make human legs obsolete; the train did not make the bicycle obsolete, and the plane did not make the train obsolete. In fact, the four generations of communications media are complementary.

For at least the past eight years, Judy Brandeis, a secondary English teacher on leave and editor of *Media Focus*, has been actively promoting media education within the schools—with only limited success. She expressed the hope that media education "...might make it through the back door with the inevitable convergence of the computer, the telephone and the television."



[The three-dimensional aspect explained by Gardner]. A member of the audience soon cautioned everyone to recall the '50s when education pundits were extolling the potential of tv as a teaching tool with much the same enthusiasm and bombast saved these days for the

computer. And look at what has *not* happened over the past 40 years.

Following panel presentations, Schurmann and Rollins shared their thoughts and feelings about their classroom projects and commented on a number of points. Both teachers admitted feeling intimidated. "I felt like I was setting out in a very small boat onto a very large sea," said Schurmann.

Both teachers agreed that the process took much, much longer than anticipated, especially at the outset. They described getting on-line as being "cumbersome" and "very, very frustrating." And both could not overstate the importance of having a skilled and willing resource person on hand. Without such a person, their message seemed to be that there was no point in pursuing the projects.

What does this all add up to?

Questions and comments from the audience prompted a number of observations. [See BOX] Were Schurmann's and Rollin's expeditions into Cyberspace worthwhile? Does the public school sector have something to learn from these private school undertakings? Rollins admitted that her students learned a lot about e-mail and about *surfing the net* but little else. Her girls also enjoyed the social aspect of the exercise, she said. They kept logs of their once-a-week activities, enduring proof that they enjoyed taking "detours" into entertainment areas. Often the bell would ring before the students had gotten started on any real research, Rollins said.

Schurmann felt her students benefitted a great deal from the feedback they received from "published" writers. She admitted feeling inadequate to the task herself because of limitations on her time. Most adult authors were generous in their appraisal of the young authors' work, she said. She also admitted that even once the project's bugs were smoothed out, she and her resource person spent one hour a day sending and receiving e-mail. (Students were not permitted to perform these tasks for fear that a skilled Netphile might commandeer the computer and waste valuable on-line time. WEIR costs $650 for 30 hours of on-line time over a four-month period.)

Scott Gardner and Judith Schurmann

Ultimately, despite the intensive effort and investment in time, both English teachers felt good about their classroom experience with the Internet.

Hearing about these first timid forays by teachers onto the infobahn, some members of the audience expressed concern about whether using the Internet as a glorified library (one with a baffling cataloguing system, to boot)) or as a fancy typewriter, phone or fax is missing the boat when it comes to exploiting the potential of the computer in the classroom. Did any of the students get anywhere special or did they just get *anywhere*, faster? And without disparaging the commendable pioneer spirit of Schurmann and Rollins, one wondered whether the admitted technophobes were not simply carried away by the thrill of learning something new themselves.

Many believe, and both Schurmann and Rollins seemed to agree, that the students have a lot to teach the teachers with respect to these new technologies. But is that enough? The question remains, "Who will teach the teachers?" If this panel discussion proved anything, it is that widespread and effective teacher training is of vital importance if computers are to be successfully integrated into the classroom.

Maybe this "new" computer technology does have the potential to change the nature of learning, as Professor Gardner claimed in his opening talk. It has the potential of providing students with many new and wonderful sources of information and heretofore unimagined opportunities for creative expression. Perhaps teachers of the future will act more as "guides on the side" rather than as "sages on stage." But it cannot be denied, a good guide still needs to know how to read a compass, especially when setting out in a very small boat on a very large sea.

Dorothy Nixon is a Montreal-area freelance writer and editor of "The Quebec Home & School News."

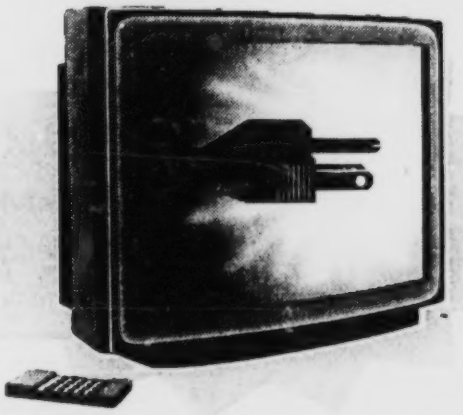
BOX

Feedback from the floor

- Teacher training needs to be stood on its head.
- Who will have access? Will all schools be able and willing to provide complete access?
- Internet is as addictive as tv.
- Being on Internet is like being assaulted by junkmail.
- Is it a double-edged sword, becoming a sponge on energy and budget?
- It will create problems later, as every teacher has a discipline and the Internet blurs the distinction between disciplines.
- There is resistance amongst teachers as they want to do things the way they have always done them.
- Nothing is happening in the high schools where it is most needed to prepare young people for the workforce.
- Integration of the computer in the classroom requires some lateral thinking.
- Where are the programmes to teach social sciences?

Turned off, tuned out – left out

For those old enough to remember the '60s, it seems like only yesterday that Dr. Timothy Leary urged the youth to "...turn on, tune out and drop out." For some, his refrain evokes a certain nostalgia; for others it is a chilling indictment of a misdirected society. Thirty years later, things have changed significantly and our young people are now being urged to turn *off* instead of turn on. And the "drug" they are being asked to tune out is tv.



During the week of April 24-30, 1995, *TV-Free America*, a recently-established organization, urged Americans to celebrate National TV-Turnoff Week. As described in their promotional materials, this organization "...encourages Americans to reduce the amount of television they watch, raises the awareness about the harmful effects of excessive television-watching and urges Americans to replace TV time with activities that lead to more literate, productive lives and engaged citizenship." These words should prompt both advocates and opponents of the media and media education to react strongly.

To supporters of media education, the message is extremely disturbing for it carries with it a number of dangerous and inaccurate assumptions about tv once reserved for the uninformed. One of these is that we need only pull the plug on our sets to eradicate social unrest, ensure literacy, produce "good" citizens and make our world a better place to enjoy nature, exercise, family sing-alongs and arts and crafts. One cannot help but be shocked at such a facile approach; the temptation to throw up our arms in frustration is overwhelming.

Denial – the easy way out

How can we possibly hope to change what disturbs us about tv if we simply turn off our sets and ignore what we do not like? There is a danger in the assumption that if we close our eyes to what is unpleasant, it will disappear. This position is difficult to reconcile in academic environments which promote critical thinking and a diversity of ideas. How likely is it that critics of a particular piece of literature would actively promote the closure of libraries in order to measure the effects of a society without books? Who would call for barring visits to the museum because the collection might include one controversial piece of art? While these may seem like extreme examples, the analogies stand. They also underscore the level of discomfort which many people feel when discussing tv as a context for learning.

Because they often feel powerless to supervise their children's viewing habits in terms of frequency and choice of programs, parents and teachers search desperately for some measure of control. Parents worry about their children's values and how influences outside the home shape the way they view the world and interact with others. None of these concerns is unfounded. Therefore, parents and teachers would do well to continue discussing these issues as they attempt to identify solutions.

However, one thing is certain – neither answers nor solutions lie in turning the tv off for a day, a week or a year. To participate in such an exercise will only provide a false sense of security that parents are protecting their children from the enemy and arming them with the strength to "kick the habit." In fact, tv and popular culture are far more than habits; they are integral parts of our society and will not go away.

Education is the best weapon

Turning off the tv also assumes that all programming is violent, bereft of any educational or social value. This, too, is not an accurate assessment. Anyone who has followed programming trends over the past 10 - 15 years has seen slow, but definite changes in tv fare, many of them for the better. Making sweeping generalizations is judgmental and dangerous and demands that we be prepared to enter a discussion of censorship and values.

Those who subscribe to a tv-turnoff, no matter how temporary, may be able to explain how, once the tv has been safely unplugged, the metamorphosis will magically occur. It is hard to imagine that suggested activities like game nights, family sing-alongs and visits to parks will ensure that families will suddenly interact in an ideal manner and that literacy skills will soar.

The safer approach is to provide the means for people to become critical and discriminating viewers. Media education is the only way to do this. Providing parents, teachers and students with the tools to interact with and better understand the media is the most responsible action anyone should be recommending. Enlightened viewers of any age can then make their own choices which may well include the choice of tuning into another program or even turning off the tv.

The Canadian way

Coincidentally, during the week that Americans were being asked to unplug their tv sets, Canadians in London, Ontario, were being urged to participate in Media Violence Awareness Week. Sponsored by the London Family Court Clinic, and

with corporate support, this fundraising initiative differed greatly from the American project: Canadian families were urged to watch tv rather than to turn it off. The objective was to increase awareness of what children watch.

Rather than taking parents and children away from their homes and creating false expectations about family outings, this project stressed the importance of creating "stay-at-home" family viewing. It involved the purchase of a ticket which bought a non-violent movie from *Jumbo Video*, a pizza from *Pizza Hut*, a bottle of soft drink and *Hostess/Frito-Lay* products to munch on while watching the video together. This approach, although still somewhat idealistic, removes at least some of the paranoia about the technology, but it falls short of leading us to new ideas about tv and its impact on children. A more optimistic approach would make an honest assessment of the medium and select what is good about tv rather than presume that all programming is poor.

To be more effective, the practice of watching tv critically should extend beyond videos to include family viewing of tv programs which are not laden with violence and/or sexual overtones. Those programs do exist. Television does not broadcast *only* the worst of what we imagine; it also provides some admirable fare.

Parents and teachers should be encouraged to watch *more* tv and to watch it carefully. Only then will they have a better understanding of what they want to change. Recognizing that all media are not malevolent, more people will note that some are valuable sources of information, education and entertainment.

We need to believe that we have the individual and collective strength to actively challenge those issues about the media which are disturbing to us rather than passively submit to reactionary methods of dismissing their presence in our society.

Turning off and tuning out at home does not ensure that the rest of the neighborhood is doing the same; it only ensures that some will surely be left out of our highly-technological information society. [JB]

See LAC TO PONDER No 2 on p.4.

News & Notes

Workshop

Screening images

Chris Worsnop Turns Theory to Practice
Saturday, November 4, 1995
The Centre for Literacy
Information: The Centre for Literacy, Tel: (514) 931-8731, local 1415

National and International Conferences and Events

Screen Studies Conference
June 29 - July 1, 1995
Glasgow, Scotland
Information: John Logie Baird Centre, Glasgow University, Glasgow G128QQ

World Meeting on the Teaching of Audiovisual Media and 4th International Congress on the Pedagogies of Representation
July 3 - 8, 1995
Galicia, Spain
The conference, sponsored by UNESCO is being organized by Nova Escola Galega and Escala de Imaxe e Son de Galicia with the collaboration of several organizations. Specialists from all over the world will address topics including pedagogy, research, new technologies and values.
Information: Pé de imaxe, Escola de Imaxe e Son de Galicia, Someso, 6, 15008 A CORUNA-SPAIN

1995 Media Literacy Summer Institute
August 21 - 25, 1995
Sponsored by The Association of Media Literacy (Ontario) in conjunction with The Photographic Arts Department, Ryerson Polytechnic University, the institute will be held at the Rogers Communication Centre, Ryerson Polytechnic University.
Information: Media Literacy Summer Institute, 300-47 Ranleigh Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4N 1X2
Tel: (416) 488-7280

The National Media Literacy Conference
September 22 - 24, 1995
Broyhill Centre, Appalachian State University
Boone, North Carolina
The conference will address an interdisciplinary approach to the impact of the mass media on schools, society, students and citizens.
Information and presentation proposals: Dr. David Considine, National Media Literacy Conference, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608 Tel: (704) 262-2270; Fax: (704) 262-2686

Moving Performance The British Experience of Early Cinema
January 6 - 8, 1996
To celebrate the centenary of cinema, The University of Bristol, Department of Drama: Theatre, Film, Television will host a conference focusing on performance around the turn of the century; both new modes of performance the various forms of conventional stage performance.
Information: Dr. Sarah Street, University of Bristol, Department of Drams, Cantocks Close, Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UP
Tel: 0117.9287838; Fax 0017.9288251

- The Spring 1995 issue of *Telemedium* (Volume 41, No 1), the National Telemedia Council's newsletter, is largely devoted to media literacy and the family. A number of articles focus on strategies for parents and practices for both parents and teachers interested in promoting a better understanding of the media in their homes and classrooms.
- Former Montrealer Ray Straatsma, now at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, is the contact person for information about a series of summer institutes for media education in July and August, 1995.
Information: e-mail: rstraats@sfu.ca
- "Copyright and the Information Highway, Preliminary Report of the Copyright SubCommittee", published by the Information Highway Advisory Council was made available shortly after the new year. Copies of the preliminary report in both languages can be obtained from: Information Highway Advisory Council Secretariat, 300 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0C9, Tel: (613) 990-6692; Fax: (613) 941-1164
Internet: council@iste.ca

Copies of this document in English and French are available at The Centre for Literacy.

Review

Media Literacy, Keys to Interpreting Media Messages

by Art Silverblatt, Praeger Publishers (Westport, Connecticut), 307 pp.

As media education wends its way slowly into classrooms, it is often the result of an individual teacher's interest in or curiosity about the subject. Because few courses have yet been officially recognized, few schools or school boards have given much thought to textbooks. For this reason, teachers who decide to address media education are often in a quandary as to what texts to use. For many years, there simply was nothing to choose from; that is beginning to change as publishers are becoming increasingly aware of a new market.

Media education, by its very nature, is different from traditional school subjects. Because so much of the context for study is found in the world the students inhabit there is little doubt that the best "texts" are the tv, movie and computer screens as well as magazines, newspapers and other artifacts of popular culture. However, one must also supplement these texts with a traditional text, and Art Silverblatt's *Media Literacy, Keys to Interpreting Media Messages* is one to consider.

Most suitable for use with senior secondary and post-secondary students, the book provides an excellent survey of topics relevant to media education including the communication process, advertising, production values and issues in media communication such as the media as they relate to violence, social change and global communication.

'One of the principal goal of *Media Literacy* is to enable you to realize a healthy independence from the pervasive influence of the media and make up your mind about issues. In the course of the text, I will be presenting some ideas and hypotheses about the media. I invite you to challenge these assertions and extend my arguments so that you can come to your own conclusions.'

Preface p. IX

In the preface, Silverblatt claims that the text offers a critical approach to mass communication and it succeeds in delivering on that promise. One questionable claim is that the media are simply neutral channels through which information is conveyed to large groups. He tempers this by adding that the media can be used for many purposes, either well or badly, depending on the intention and/or skill of the communicator. Although this assumption is controversial, it does not detract from the material in the text.

The book is divided into three parts which deal with "Interpreting Media Messages", "Media Formats" and "Issues and Outcomes", respectively. The author's approach is grounded more in communication studies than in English Language Arts, aligning the content more closely with the media than with the English class. This is one of the book's strengths, for without hitting teachers and students over the head, the text succeeds in illustrating that the media naturally borrow from conventions of writing and literature. All are part of the communication process founded on many of the same principles. The chapters are clearly laid out, making effective use of screens and boxes to highlight specific text and each ending with a brief summary and a section which highlights key points in the chapter. The ample glossary of terms at the end of the book can be most useful in the classroom

Canadian teachers and students should know that the references are nearly exclusively American; however, they should not be deterred from using the text and making adjustments. The chapter entitled "American Political Communication" may be useful in doing a comparative study of Canadian and American media practices.

One disappointment is that while Silverblatt does succeed in presenting a comprehensive overview of the media, he devotes no part of the book to computer technology and its ever-increasing role in the media industry. This, unfortunately, seems typical of researchers in the field at this point. However, what Silverblatt does in this text, he does well. (JB)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

– in newspapers, on television (the news is read), in political campaigns, in public information material, official documentation, advertisements, and "junkmail"? How does such printed matter differ from one country to another?

Talk with the families with whom you are working. In what ways are they critically aware of the ways in which reading, writing and texts are used in the broader contexts of their everyday lives? Learn from them...

Community: doing a literacy dig

In the community in which you live, when and why do people read and write?...Ask the parents with whom you are working to do a literacy dig in their homes and encourage them to explore their own person and shared literacy configurations. Walk through the neighborhood with a parent and discover together the types and uses of reading and writing that are found in the neighborhood in which the parent lives...

Individual

In the community in which these families live how do parents and children talk about the literacy practices and uses that are a part of their everyday lives?...How can you help families use their literacy skills to overcome the difficulties that they have identified in their everyday lives?

...Help them describe the types and uses of literacy that are a part of everyday lives.

The Word

How do the forms of written discourse affect the ways in which both the parents and children with whom you are working read the print that they have decided is important in their everyday lives? What can you learn about the role that the language of written texts plays in families of different cultures, different languages, using different orthographies and different sign systems? How is meaning located? Whose meaning? How can we learn from the complexities of each others texts?

Writing

- **Autobiographical: "My mother wrote her life history before she died."**
  Writing to understand oneself. Writing to record one's life history. Writing to share life with others.
- **Creative: "Do you want to read the poem that I've just written?"**
  Writing as a means of self-expression.
- **Educational: "We had a test on chapter 3! I wrote a lot but I don't know how I did."**
  Writing to fulfill the educational requirements of school and college courses. Writing to educate oneself.
- **Environmental: "I've lost my dog." "Let's put up a notice in case someone finds him."**
  Writing in public places for others to read.
- **Financial: "What are you doing?" "I'm trying to balance my checkbook!"**
  Writing to record numerals, and to write out amounts and purposes of expenditures, and for signatures. Writing to consider (and sometimes make changes to) the economic circumstances of one's everyday life. Writing to fulfill practical (financial) needs of everyday life.
- **Instrumental: "This form is the same as the last one." "Ours is not to reason why ..."**
  Writing to meet practical needs and to "manage" / organize everyday life. Writing to gain access to social institutions or helping agencies.
- **Interactional: "I love you too!"**
  Writing to establish, build and maintain social relationship. Writing to negotiate family responsibilities. The writer envisions or "knows" his or her audience and writes to the addressee.
- **Memory-Aids: "Light bulbs, garbage bags..."**
  Writing to serve as a memory aid for both oneself and others.
- **Recreational: "Crosswords keep me busy."**
  Writing during leisure time for the enjoyment of the activity.
- **Scientific: "I've been writing about the planets. I like Jupiter the best."**
  Writing to develop new understandings of the natural or physical sciences.
- **Substitutional: "P.S. I found my underwear!"**
  Reinforcement or substitution for oral messages. Writing used when direct oral communication is not possible or when a written message is needed to create a record (e.g. for legal purposes).
- **Technical: "Save. C: Den\Arizona2\Types and uses."**
  Writing to gain information using the different symbolic forms of technological communications (computer, fax, virtual reality). Writing to advance one's understandings of the functions of such technologies.

What do employers *really* want?

[A survey of over 4000 American employers designed by the National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce (EQW) was administered in the fall of 1994 by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and Sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The first findings confirm some previous intuitions about employer expectations and investment in training, but raise questions about clear connections between school-based education and the workplace. Tony Sarmiento, Education Department, AFL-CIO, presented the findings in a workshop on New Visions of Workplace Literacy at the Conference on College Composition and Communications, March 22, 1995.]

First Results

Employers' answers to many of the key questions on the survey are grouped into three broad categories which link employers, workers, and educational suppliers: employers' practices; employers' assessment of the nature and quality of their workers; and employers' use of schools and other educational suppliers.

- **The restructuring of the American economy has not led to a deskilling of work.** Quite the contrary, only 5 percent of establishments indicated any reduction in the skill requirements of their jobs, while 56 percent reported increasing their skill requirements

- **Despite the considerable attention given to new modes of work organization, the use of high-performance work systems among employers still remains the exception rather than the rule.** Only one-quarter of establishments reported using any benchmarking programs to compare practices and performances with other organizations, and only 37 percent reported that they had adopted a formal Total Quality Management (TQM) program. Very few workers engage in arrangements that have become the hallmarks of high-performance work: only 12 percent of non-managerial

BOX

What were the questions?

As employers are increasingly asked to invest in more purposeful school-to-work transitions, the Educational Quality of the Workforce National Employer Survey (EQW-NES) asks them to report their willingness to invest in workers skills, to assess their current and future skill needs, and to indicate the extent to which they rely on partnerships with schools to supply the necessary skills of new workers.

The survey asked:

- Have employers really lowered the skill requirements for many of the jobs they offer?
- How much have the organization of work, employers' investments in new technology and employers practices actually changed?
- When employers invest in training, what kinds of instruction do they provide and from whom?
- Do employers think their workers are proficient in their current jobs?
- How important are grades, teachers' recommendations, the reputation of a school, or an applicant's

workers participate in self-managed teams, and only 17 percent participate in job rotation. However, on average, 54 percent of non-managerial employees participate in regularly scheduled meetings to discuss work-related problems. Of employers who conduct regular meetings with non-managerial employees, over two-thirds reported that workers discuss working conditions and health and safety issues at these meetings, but only 42 percent of these establishments allow non-managerial workers to discuss choices about new technology or equipment

- **The establishment that makes no training investment in at least some of its workers is a rarity.** Virtually all establishments provide either formal or informal (on-the-job) training: 97 percent provide formal training, while 81 percent provide formal training. Indeed, over half (57 percent) of the establishments reported an increase in their formal training over the last three years.

Employers' assessment of employees was more unexpected.

- **On the average, establishments reported that just over 80 percent of their workers are fully proficient in their current jobs.** The bad news is that one out of every five workers was judged to be not fully proficient, perhaps because he or she lacked the necessary skills or because the skill requirements of the job had increased

While the mean reported value of the percentage of employees with less than one year of tenure was 21 percent, the median value was slightly less than 10 percent. This finding reflects a modest growth in employment, but the large difference in the mean and median values indicates a marked difference across establishments in the degree of churning in their labor forces

In terms of their use of schools, employer responses represented mixed news.

- **There is little evidence that establishments are making significant investments in remedial training or basic education**

Although years of schooling and the skills certificates applicants possess are a factor in employers' screening and hiring decisions, they pay little attention to measurements of school performance. **What is frankly more important to employers is how the attitude and communication skills – and whether or not he or she has a successful history of previous work experience.**

BOX

Who was asked?

More than 4,000 private establishments in the U.S. from both the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors were sampled by telephone survey in August and September of 1994. The survey over-sampled establishments in the manufacturing sector and those with more than 100 employees. Public-sector employers, non-profit institutions, establishments with less than 20 employees, and corporate headquarters were excluded. Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) was used to administer each survey, which took approximately 28 minutes to complete. Two versions of the instrument were administered, one for establishments in the manufacturing sector and one for establishments in non-manufacturing. The surveys were virtually identical and differed only linguistically in places where the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors use different terms to describe comparable aspects of their businesses.

Designed by Professor Lisa Lynch of the Fletcher School of Tuft's University – working with EQW's Board of Senior Scholars, EQW Co-Directors Robert Zemsky and Peter Cappelli, and Nevzer Stacey of the School-to-Work Office and the Department of Education – the survey establishes a baseline for understanding when, how and why employers invest in the skills their workers.

What adults need to know and be able to do: Toward a customer-driven definition of goal

[The question of what adults in literacy programs need to know and want to know is fiercely contended among funders, policy makers and practitioners. But students themselves are rarely consulted and even less rarely listened to. In 1994, The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL, Washington D.C.), conducted a survey of 1500 adult literacy students across the U.S. to ask precisely those questions. The summary below categorizes the responses. It was presented by Sondra Stein, Senior Policy Advisor, NIFL, in a workshop on New Visions of Workplace Literacy at the Conference on College Composition and Comunications, March 22, 1995.]

1 Literacy for access and orientation

Literacy for access and orientation includes all the ways in which adults see literacy as helping them locate themselves in the world. In some cases this is an actual physical or geographic location – reading maps and signs – so they can tell how to get to a particular destination. In most cases, however, the orientation adults seek from literacy is psychological or social.

Adults want to be able to read letters and messages so they can "take care of business;" to read the news so they know what's going on in the world. They want access to the broader world of ideas and opportunities that surround them and they know literacy – including the ability to work with numbers as well as to read and write for themselves – is the price of the ticket.

Literacy for access and orientation includes the range of prose, document and quantitative tasks that are assessed in the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS). Indeed, adults' lists of specific skills they need for everyday life are interchangeable with the tasks on the three NALS scales.

2 Literacy as voice

A second fundamental purpose for literacy that emerges...is literacy as voice. Writer after writer talks about being able to communicate what he or she thinks and feels to others. This includes the ability to use written and oral language effectively in interpersonal and social situations.

For adults who are not native speakers of English, literacy as voice specifically includes fluency in English – knowing how to use the dominant language of this country to express thoughts, feelings, needs, experiences.

Literacy as voice is also connected with expressing the self, and therefore, with being heard. For many adults, voting, in particular, and participation in the political process, in general, are prime examples of this understanding of "voice."

3 Literacy as a vehicle for independent action

Adults also write about literacy as a vehicle for independent action. Again and again, adults sound the chord of not needing to depend on others, of being able to choose to share something with another person rather than needing them to tell you what it says. Literacy in this sense reflects the high value American culture puts on being able to do things for yourself. It also reflects practical concerns about privacy and being able to protect yourself and your family from those who might take advantage of you because you can't read and write.

Adult also emphasize the role of literacy in making informed decisions. Again and again adults write about wanting to be able to gather all the information and analyze it for themselves so they can decide what is in the best interests of their selves, their families and their communities.

4 Literacy as a bridge to the future

The fourth fundamental purpose of literacy is as a bridge to the future. Running through all of the adult perspectives there is a sense of a world that is rapidly changing. This is not surprising since adults were specifically asked to think about what adults will need to know and be able to do in the year 2000.

And they did. One JOBS participant writes: "Without an education in the year 2000 we the people will be in serious trouble. Because now everything is moving forward fast and without an education you will be moving nowhere (0064)."

This fear of being left behind suffuses adult writings. One adult writes: "The world is changing so fast that you can't lose time (0083:9)." Another is even more graphic:

"Competition in the global community can run you over if you do not get the information required for today (0046:3)."

The surety of rapid change is what makes literacy and education, in general, so critical – not just for the adults who responded, but for their children. The adults are very clear that without education, one cannot keep up, because one can't change and develop as the world changes.

Resources are catalogued and may be borrowed in person or by mail (postage covered by the borrower). Documents should be requested by number. Documents can be consulted in The Centre from Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

In addition to the materials listed in the catalogue, we have directories of program and services, bibliographies on many subjects, international periodicals and newsletters, catalogues of learning materials, tapes/videos, and hanging files. We are connected to the National Adult Literacy Database and Internet.

Printouts on specific subject headings can be requested at cost. Information: Catherine Duncan (514) 931-8731, local 1415; literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca.

870.067
Brittan, Jessica.
An Introduction to Numeracy Teaching. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1993.

200.004
Atkinson, John, and Mark Spilsbury.
Basic Skills and Jobs: A Report on the Basic Skills Needed at Work.
London, England: The Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1993.

200.008
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Basic Skills and Jobs. London, England.

200.013
The Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Basic Skills in Everyday Life.
London, England: 1994.

200.009
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Basic Skills in Prisons: Assessing the Need. London, England: 1994.

200.005
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Basic Skills Support: In Business and Industry. London, England: 1994.

200.003
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Basic Skills Support in Colleges: Assessing the Need. London, England: 1992.

1110.015
Chilton, Liz, Christine Cox, and Jo Yeandle.
Crediting Numeracy: Foundations Stage 1 and Stage 2. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1991.

700.038
Klein, Cynthia.
Diagnosing Dyslexia: A Guide to the Assessment of Adults with Specific Learning Difficulties. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1993.

1040.009
Abell, Sue.
Helping Adults to Spell. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1994.

1110.016
The Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
IT and Basic Skills, a training pack for tutors. London, England: 1993.
*Includes four seperate books - 1110.016.1-4

200.007
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Parents and Their Children: The Intergenerational Effect of Poor Basic Skills. London, England: 1993.

200.014
The Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
Quality Standards for Basic Skills Programmes. London, England:

1110.014
Sutcliffe, Jeannie.
Teaching Basic Skills to Adults with Learning Difficulties. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1994.

200.011
Ekinsmyth, Carol, and John Bynner.*The Basic Skills of Young Adults: Some findings from the 1970* British Cohort Study. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1994.

1180.038
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
The Cost to Industry: Basic Skills and the UK Workforce. London, England: 1993.

870.068
Coben, Diana, and Sandy Black.
The Numeracy Pack: Book 1.
London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1984.

1040.010
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit.
The Spelling Pack. London, England: 1993.

200.010
Kambouri, Maria, and Hazel Francis.
Time to Leave: Progression and Drop Out in Basic Skills Programmes. London, England: Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit. 1994.

Chronological Conference Listing

Montreal

PAPT-PACT Teachers Convention
November 16-17, 1995
Montreal, QC
Information: Donal Irving,
Tel: (514) 252-7946

National/International

The Forty-First Annual Conference on Reading and Writing
"Teaching Reading and Writing"
June 18 - 21, 1995
Concordia College
Moorhead, MN
Information: Forty-First Annual Conference on Reading and Writing, Faculty Mail 305, Concordia College, 901 8 th Street S., Moorhead, MN 56562.

The 23rd Wyoming Conference on English
"The Politics of English Studies"
June 20 - 24, 1995
University of Wyoming
Information: Kathy Evertz, English Department, Box 3353 University Station, Laramie, WY 82071-3353, Tel: (307) 766-6311 or 6486,
e-mail: KEVERTZ@UWY.EDU

NCTE International Conference
"Reconstructing Language and Learning for the 21st Century"
July 7 -9, 1995
New York, NY
Information: NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL, 61801-1096,
Tel: (217) 328-3870, ext. 203.

Sixth International Conference on the Teaching of English (IFTE)
July 10 - 14, 1995
New York, NY
Information: John Mayher, NYU, 239 Greene Street, Room 635, New York, NY 10003,
Fax: (212) 995-4198.

Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition
July 12 -15, 1995
University Park, PA
Information: Don Bialostosky, Pennsylvania State University, 117 Burrowes Building, University Park, PA, 16802-6200, Tel: (814) 863-3069; Fax: (814) 863-7285;
e-mail: alg5@psuvm.psu.edu

Australian Reading Association
"Celebrating Difference: Confronting Literacies
July 12 - 15, 1995
Sydney, Australia
Information: PO Box 257, Gladesvill, NSW 2111, Tel/Fax: (02) 878-3396.

32nd Annual Conference of the United Kingdom Reading Association
July 29 - August 1, 1995
Winchester, England
Information: Bobbie Neate, King Alfred's College, Sparkford Rd., Winchester, SO22 4NR, UK,
Tel: (0962) 827730 or (0962) 868836.

15th International Conference on Critical Thinking and Educational Reform
Sonoma State University
Juiy 30 - August 2, 1995
Information: The Center for Critical Thinking, Sonoma State University, 1801 E. Cotati Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA 94928-3609, Tel: (707) 664-2940; Fax: (707) 664-4101.

Adult Literacy and Technology Conference
August 4 - 5, 1995
Philadelphia PA
Information: See p. 5

Canadian Association for Comunity Living/Roeher Institute
"Beyond Words: The Power of Inclusion"
A Weekend Focusing on Literacy for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities
September 15 -17, 1995
Winnipeg, MN
Information: Tel: (204) 947-1118; Fax: (204) 949-1464.

Learning Communities and Collaboration
Delta College Regional Conference
October 19 -21, 1995
Frankenmuth, MI
Information: Roz Weedman, Tel: (517) 686-9534.

Coalitions for Learning and Growth
An international celebration of language culture and communication
October 19 -22, 1995
Toronto, ON
Information: Ian Waldron, Conference Co-chair, 1336 Pape Avenue, Toronto, ON, Canada, M4K 3X2,
Fax: (416) 425-5873 or (519) 622-7008.

The Assocation for Business Communication
60th Annual Convention
November 1 - 4, 1995
Orlando, FL
Information: Sherry B. Scott, 747 Fieldstone Drive, NE, #304, Leesburg, VA 22075, Tel./Fax: (703) 779-0844,
e-mail: 71233.1664@compuserve.com

Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking
Ethical Education: Learning Values, Teaching Practices
November 3 -4, 1995
Annandale-on Hudson, NY
Information: Paul Connolly or Theresa Vilardi, Tel: (914) 758-7431 or 7432.

The Third Spilman Symposium on Issues in Teaching Writing
"Evaluating Student Writing: The Consequences of our Goals and Pedagogies"
November 18, 1995
Lexington, VA
Information: Robert L. McDonald, Department of English and Fine Arts, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, VA, Tel: (703) 464-7240; e-mail: mcdonaldrl%english%ovmi@ist.vmi.edu

MLA 1995
December 26 - 30, 1995
Chicago, Il
Guidelines: September 1994 issue of *PMLA* (pp 556-67)

CCCC Winter Workshop on Teaching Composition to Undergraduates
"Curricular Changes: Writing Across the Curriculum, Technology and Writing, Assessment and Writing"
January 3 - 6, 1996
Clearwater Beach, FL

International Reading Association
Adolescent/Adult Literacy: Making a Difference
February 2 - 4, 1996
Washington, D.C.
Information: Adolescent/Adult Literacy Program Committee, IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139, Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226; Fax: (302) 731-1057.

Technology and Learning
February 23 - 24, 1996
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Information: Lance Rivers, Department of English, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901.

World Conference on Literacy
"Improving Literacy, Changing Lives: Innovations and Interconnections for development"
March 12 -15, 1996
Philadelphia, PA
Information: World Conference on Literacy - University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111, Tel: (215) 898-2100; Fax: (215) 898-9804.

College Composition and Communication (4Cs)
March 16 -21, 1996
Milwaukee, WI

41st Annual Convention International Reading Association
April 28 - May 3, 1996
New Orleans, LA
Information: Division of Research, IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139, Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226; Fax: (302) 731-1057.

Summer Institutes 1995

The Learning Associates of Montreal Summer Institute
Jazz Up Your Skills
An Upbeat Approach to Working with Students with Learning Disabilities
July 3 -5, 1995
Montreal, QC
Information: The Learning Associates of Montreal, 4203 Ste. Catherine West, Westmount, QC, H3Z 1P6, Tel: (514) 989-9360; Fax: (514) 989-8419.

McGill University Centre for Educational Leadership
International Summer Institutes
1) Including Students with Disabilities
July 5 -8, 1995
2) Student-centred Assessment
July 31 - August 3, 1995
3) Cooperative Learning
August 7 -10, 1995
Information: Centre for Educational Leadership, 3724 McTavish Street, Montreal, QC, H2A 1Y2, Tel: (514) 398-7044; Fax: (514) 398-7436, e-mail: JOAN@CEL.LAN.McGILL.CA

McGill University
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Graduate Summer Institute 1995

Gender, Autobiography, and Critical Literacy
July 3 - 14, 1995
Information: Dr. Nancy Jackson, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, McGill University, 3700 McTavish, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2, Tel: (514) 398-6367; Fax: (514) 398-6770.

Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking
Summer Writing Workshops
July 10 -14, 1995
Annandale-on Hudson, NY
Information: Paul Connolly or Theresa Vilardi, Tel: (914) 758-7431 or 7432.

The Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Summer Workshop
July 25 -27, 1995

WPA Annual Conference
July 27 -30, 1995
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA
Information: William Smith, Department of English, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA, 08225; e-mail: billsmi@henson.cc.wwu.edu

The Assembly on Expanded Perspectives on Learning
National Council of Teachers of English
Symposium for Educators
"Feeding the Mind, Nurturing the Spirit"
with James Moffett
August 11, 14, 1995
Winter Park CO
Information: Dick Graves, Curriculum and Teaching, Auburn University, AL 36849; Tel: (205) 844-6889.

Details on listings available from The Centre for Literacy, (514) 931-8731, local 1415.

What do entertainment applications have that education could use?

The Queen's-Bell Technology in Learning Project

A group of researchers at Queen's University has hypothesised that experientially vivid and exciting aspects of successful entertainment programs can be effectively used for instructional applications. By paying as much attention to user gratification as to content mastery, educators can improve instructional practice and increase learning.

The researchers, in conjunction with Bell Canada, are reviewing the instructional use and development of information technology. They are interested in discovering how developers and users evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the following twelve rapidly-evolving instructional technologies used in education (K -12 and post-secondary) and in the workplace:

- video conferencing
- interactive CD-ROM
- desktop video (video conferencing, audio-graphics)
- Computer conferencing (on-line interaction, e.g. e-mail, chat)
- audio conferencing (instructional use of teleconferencing)
- embedded training (i.e. specific to and within a given computer application)
- computer-based training (CBT)
- Intelligent tutoring systems (ITS)
- electronic performance support systems (EPSS)
- virtual reality
- simulators

The research team is also studying three instructional technology applications in depth:

- video conferencing
- multimedia CD-ROM
- desktop video conferencing/ audio-graphics

Information: Dr. Martin Schiralli, Faculty of Education, Queen's University. Tel: (613) 545-6215; Fax: (613) 545-6584; e-mail: schiralm@educ.queensu.ca

Change of address
The Winter 1995 issue of LAC had a review of *Learning to Learn*, a study of adult learners conducted by the ABE Association of British Columbia. The Association has moved since the study was published in December 1994.

Currently to order a copy, contact: ABE Association of British Columbia, c/o Marilee Schelp, South Hill Education Centre, 6010 Fraser Street, Vancouver, BC, V5W 2Z7, or the Adult Literacy Contact Centre, 622-510 W. Hastings St., Vancouver, BC, V6B 1L8, Tel: (800) 663-1293; Fax: (704) 684-8520.

Program based literacy materials catalogue – Ontario

Four desktop publishing centres for literacy programs in Ontario have collected information on the materials produced by their own centres and by many literacy programs across Ontario and produced a catalogue to showcase and market the materials. The data collection was planned in the summer of 1993 in cooperation with Alpha Ontario, the Literacy and Language Training Centre and George Brown College, CoSy Network.

The first edition of the catalogue which groups materials by publisher appeared in January of 1994. There are two indexes. The main index lists all titles and a second index lists authors both in alphabetical order. On the page facing each item in the catalogue, a sample page, at actual size, has been included to show the typeface and size, illustration style etc. Symbols indicate materials into the three following categories:

Learner Written: Materials written by literacy learners.

Tutor/Practioner Tools: Includes curriculum guides as well as training manuals, workbooks and other materials for use with learners.

Interest Reading: Includes reading materials designed for adult literacy learners. May include life skills information, etc.

This catalogue is an extremely useful tool for anyone seeking Canadian program-based materials. However, many of the items have no price listed, leaving the impression that there is no cost. In fact, this is not always the case. In addition, almost every price listed had been increased since publication, in some instances substantially. Before sending a cheque, call to verify price and availability. The Clearinghouse is working on a second edition. I have suggested that they either omit prices or include a warning that prices are subject to change. Otherwise, a boon to buyers looking for non-commercial materials. [LS]

To order: Program Based Materials Project, SouthernWestern Literacy Clearinghouse, 660 Oakdale Ave., Sarnia, ON, N7V 2A9. Fax: (519) 332-6855; Tel: (519) 332-4876.

Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation 1995 Grants

The Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation, an initiative of the Book and Periodical Council, aims to make adult literacy a high profile issue and to help non-profit community literacy groups develop materials for adult learners and their teachers. The Foundation is offering two types of grants in 1995:

- Seed Grants of up to $2500 to non-profit community literacy groups to develop an idea, perform a needs assessment and create a working sample of a project. This grant will enable groups to begin the process of creating literacy materials with adequate support for the task.
- Production Grants of up to $5000 to non-profit community literacy groups to produce materials for adult learners and their teachers. Applicants must submit a working sample of the materials.

Deadline: June 30, 1995
Criteria and application forms available from Donna Lunau, Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation, 35 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON, M5R 2S9; Fax: (416) 975-1839.

1995-96 Flight for Freedom Awards

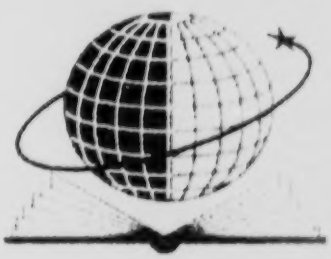
The Canada Post Corporation is seeking nominees for the 1995-96 Flight for Freedom Awards to recognize dedicated Canadians who work for the cause of literacy. Categories include community organizations, educators, learners, literacy groups and corporate leaders.

Deadline for submissions:
July 14, 1995

Guidelines and nomination forms: Flight for Freedom Awards, Canada Post Corporation, 2701 Riverside Drive, Suite NO610, Ottawa, On, K1A 0B1.

Isolating the Barriers and Strategies for Prevention: A Kit About Violence and Women's Education for Adult Educators and Adult Learners

This 85-page book documents the findings from four diverse workshops addressing violence and women's education, organized in 1993-94 by the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women. The kit, designed to make the learning environment more sensitive to women's realities, includes personal stories, curriculum material, practical strategies for creating a better learning environment and a comprehensive resource list.
To order: Send $8.00 + $2.00 handling + GST to CCLOW, 47 Main Street, Toronto, ON M4E 2V6, Tel: (416) 699-1909; Fax: (416) 699-2145.



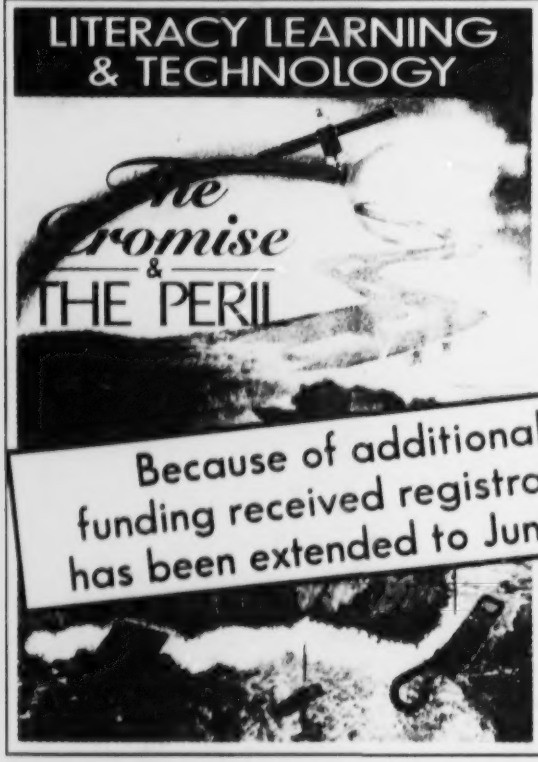
World Conference on Literacy

"Improving Literacy, Changing Lives: Innovations and Interconnections for Development"sponsored by the International Literacy Institute (ILI), UNESCO, University of Pennsylvania, and other organizations
March 12 -15, 1996
Philadelphia, PA

The 1996 World Conference on Literacy will bring together experts in the field to address a host of issues related to the improvement of global literacy efforts amid dramatic political, economic, and cultural change, and to explore innovations and interconnections in literacy for development.

Topics will include professional development, planning and policy development, curriculum development, language and gender issues, family and intergenerational literacy, R&D networks, evaluation and assessment, cooperation and mobilization, distance eductaion, and technology.
Participants: Policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and other specialists in literacy and basic education.

Information: World Conference on Literacy, International Literacy Institute, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111, Tel: (215) 898-2100; Fax: (215) 898-9804.



Summer Institute 1995

The Centre for Literacy
June 28 - 30, 1995
Montreal Quebec

Because of additional funding received registration has been extended to June 15.

Special hotel rates

Details available from:
The Centre for Literacy
Tel: (514) 931-8731 ext. 1415
Fax: (514) 931-5181
e-mail:
literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca

Publications

DRAWING: A link to Literacy

Stunning drawings and moving texts on social and personal issues that touch us all – war, race, love, AIDS, pollution – produced by college students. To order a copy send a cheque for $10.00 plus $3.00 shipping & handling plus applicable sales tax(es) in Canada. Cheque is payable to The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, H3Z 1A4.

Information on special price for multiple copies: (514) 931-8731, local 1415.

To subscribe, complete this form and mail it with your cheque to:

The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3Z 1A4

I enclose a cheque for ❑ $14 ❑ $75 ❑ $130 (Please mark choice)
Make cheque payable to The Centre for Literacy.
On multiple orders outside Montreal, please add $5.00 additional postage.

Name: _____

Institution: _____ Dept: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Single annual subscription $14
Multiple annual subscription (10) $75
Multiple subscription (20) $130

Back issues available

For special prices on institutional subscriptions of 100 or more, call (514) 931-8731, ext. 1415

Literacy Across the Curriculum

is published four times during the academic year by The Centre for Literacy

SUMMER 1995 Vol. 11 No. 2

Literacy across the curriculum

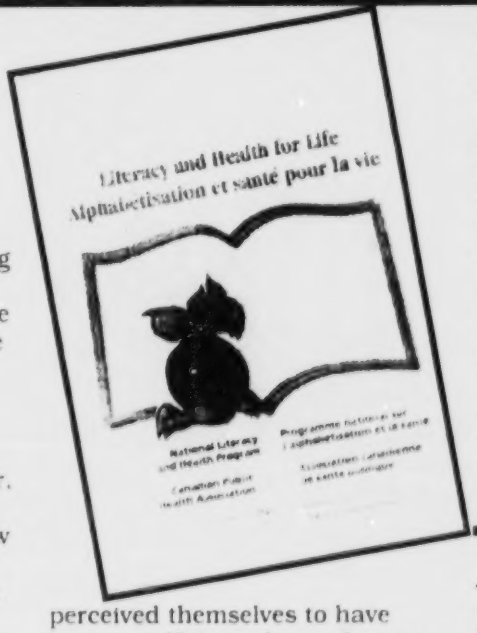
including Medi Focus

Connecting literacy in the schools, community and workplace

Health & literacy

A nurse at a Montreal hospital working on a longitudinal study of premature babies recalls filling out an information form with a teenage mother. When the nurse asked what brand of formula the baby was taking, the young woman replied, "Teddy Bear formula." The nurse was bemused. There is no such brand. When questioned further, the mother, in a rather agitated voice, said, "You know, you know the one with the teddy bear on the label!" The nurse realized at that point that the 15-year-old could not read. After years of problems in school, the girl had dropped out without having learned to read.

An article in the fall 1994 issue of *Daedalus* entitled "The Determinants of Health from a Historical Perspective" traced the strong correlation between health and wealth over the last 1000 years. Those of higher economic status and privilege who



perceived themselves to have greater self-control over destiny were consistently healthier.

Only recently has awareness grown that literacy is one of those factors of privilege which affects health. In the U.K., cohort population studies have been tracking these connections for several decades. In June of 1995, World Education, in conjunction with other American organizations, gathered 300 people at Tufts University in Boston for the first conference ever held on the topic. Among health care professionals in Canada, the link between literacy and health is being highlighted by a national awareness program from the Canadian Public Health Association [see BOX 1]

Sensitizing the professional

The campaign is sensitizing health professionals to be aware that an inability to understand, read or write the two official languages can interfere with

continued on page 2

INSIDE

4 To ponder
5 Positioning literacy: *The UK experience*
- Investing in people
- Workbase Training
- The New Reading Disc
10 Ontario Tech Survey
11 Technology conversation
12 In the classroom:Technology & Family literacy
4 Software evaluation
15 Resources: Health
16 Conferences
18 Announcements

The Centre for Literacy Montreal, Quebec

Literacy Across the Curriculum
The Centre for Literacy
3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3Z 1A4
Editor: Linda Shohet
Layout & design: Pon©tu@t!on GRAFIX

Depot légal – 1991
ISSN 1192-3288
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

The Centre for Literacy/Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.

Literacy for the 21st century
Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

continued from page 1

patients explaining their needs, understanding their diagnoses, following instructions after hospital visits or stays, and taking medications correctly. They suggest concrete actions — writing in plain language, checking the physical setting for signs and information, using alternative means of communication — video, images— and talking to make sure patients understand.

Seniors, health and communication

There is evidence that seniors may have more difficulties than other groups because the level of education among older Canadians is lower, and because many seniors came from other countries and speak a mother-tongue other than English or French. In addition, seniors often have other health problems, such as hearing or sight impairment, which interfere further with the ability to hear or read. (See Resources p.14)

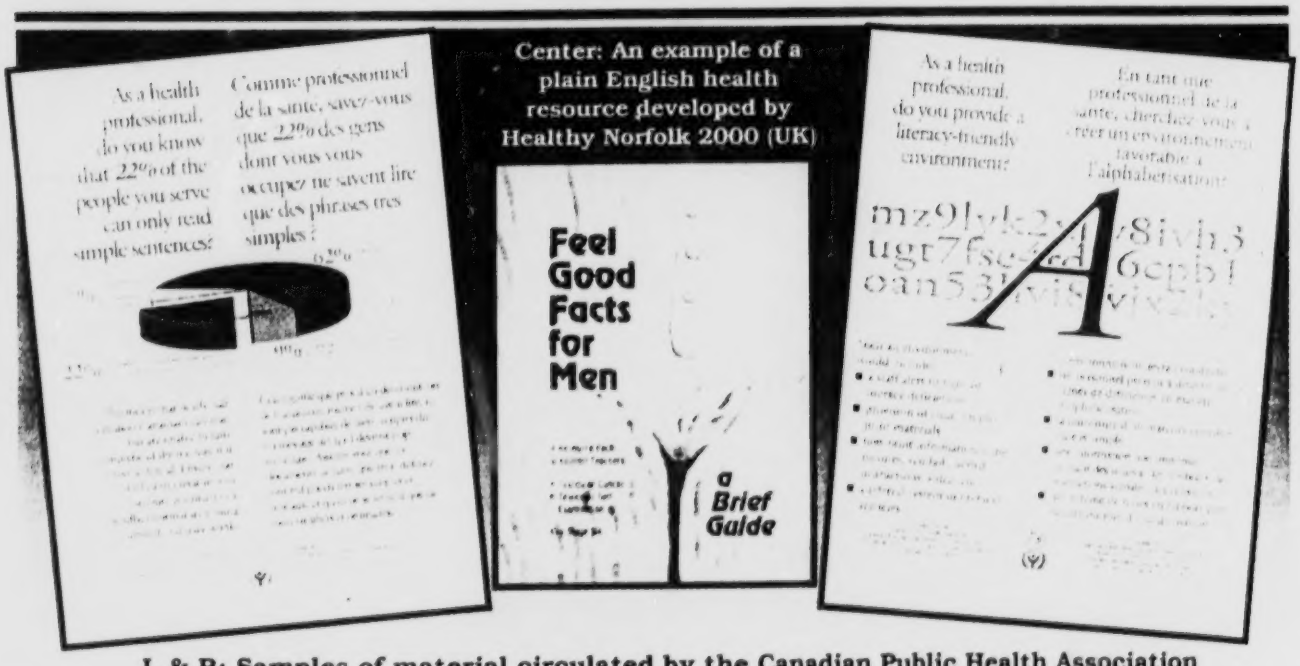
The Centre for Literacy, using Health and Literacy as one of its themes for 1995, initiated a local project in Montreal to discover how communications helps or hinders seniors in accessing services from a hospital. Two other organizations, a seniors agency and a large urban hospital, collaborated, fitting this issue into broader agendas of their own. The Centre for Literacy conducted and taped a series of focus groups with seniors and is analysing the transcripts.

The seniors organization is interested in improving seniors' access to quality health care. If

BOX 1

History of health and literacy initiatives by the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA)

- Following national surveys in the late 1980s which identified 38% of adult Canadians as having some problems in reading and writing, the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) completed the first phase of a project which documented the relationship between literacy and health.
- Also in the late 1980's, national health associations began to express their concerns about the readability of health information for Canadians with low literacy.
- In 1992, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA), with suppport from the National Literacy Secretariat, began a Demonstration Project on Literacy and Health to raise awareness among health professionals about the link between poor health and poor reading skills.
- Ten national health associations were invited to participate. Over 100,000 health professionals across Canada received information.
- In July 1993, CPHA approached NLS with a proposal to build long-term, self-sustaining commitments to the literacy agenda among its national partners and extend the partnership to twenty national health associations.
- In January 1994, the National Literacy and Health Program began
- By March 1995, 20 national organizations were involved.


As a health professional, do you know that 22% of the people you serve can only read simple sentences?
Comme professionnel de la santé, savez-vous que 22% des gens dont vous vous occupez ne savent lire que des phrases très simples?
Feel Good Facts for Men
a Brief Guide
As a health professional, do you provide a literacy-friendly environment?
En tant que professionnel de la santé, cherchez-vous à créer un environnement favorable à l'alphabétisation?

Center: An example of a plain English health resource developed by Healthy Norfolk 2000 (UK)

L & R: Samples of material circulated by the Canadian Public Health Association in their awareness package.

the project turns up evidence of need, the organization will consider designing appropriate programs for their clients, i.e. providing information, helping clients communicate their health needs more effectively.

Strengths & weaknesses

The hospital has been conducting research into its services with the intention of identifying strengths and weaknesses. It hopes to use the data to highlight the positive and to make recommendations for possible change in particular areas where problems are identified. This project will add data to the information pool and could be used as the basis for sensitization and staff development.

Outcomes will be published later this fall in a report and shared at an open forum in early November. The Centre has also produced an annotated bibliography on health and literacy, expanding on one that was circulated at the Tufts conference in June.

Although health costs related to literacy have never been calculated, they are probably far larger than most people believe. In a society that is examining health care costs and looking for ways to reduce expenses without cutting service, this is unexplored territory. [LS]

Health & literacy:
How do they connect? A panel

Date: Thursday, November 9, 1995
Time: 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Panelists:

Deborah Gordon, Canadian Public Health Association, Ottawa

Margaret LeBrun, The Golden Age Association

Linda Shohet, The Centre for Literacy

R.S.V.P. 931-8731, local 1415 by Tuesday, November 7

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1 On talking machines

The lack of electronic communication among appliances results in, among other things, very primitive and peculiar interfaces in each. For example, as speech becomes the dominant mode of interaction between people and machines, small accessories will also need to talk and listen. However, each one of them cannot be expected to have the full means of producing and understanding spoken language. They must communicate and share such resources.

A centralist model for such sharing is tempting, and some people have suggested information "furnaces" in our basements — a central computer in the home that manages all input and output. I suspect it will not go that way, and the function will be much more distributed among a network of appliances, including one that is a champion at speech recognition and production. If both your refrigerator and your cupboard keep track of your food by reading universal product codes, only one of them needs to know how to interpret them.

Nicholas Negroponte, *Being Digital*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1995, p. 214.

2 On guidelines and intuition

Guidelines, however, are two-edged: they can help or they can hinder, encourage or discourage a student. They must be well thought out yet open-ended; for if they are too logically organized they stifle intuition, the faculty we most need for comprehending grand abstracts truths.

Grace Knoche, "Prefatory Note," *An Invitation to The Secret Doctrine*, by H.P. Blavatsky, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, CA, 1988, p.vi.

3 On browsing the Internet

Shopping by modem? Hey - sounds convenient and efficient. Online catalogs, complete with color images, will let me browse from my computer. I can negotiate directly with merchants rather than driving into town.

I'd expect the fast interactions and wide customer base of networks to provide a perfect place to sell goods, especially software, computers, and high-tech toys.

....

About the only business actually making money over the Internet is the Electronic Newsstand. You can get excerpts from several hundred magazines and, for a few dollars a month, subscribe to a magazine, to be delivered over the net.

Yet even they don't sell many subscriptions: fewer than a dozen per day. Some magazines simply get no subscribers.

Other merchants aren't having such an easy time either - The Economist reports that most generate one or two sales per day. Counting all online businesses, that's around twenty-five thousand dollars in sales every day. My neighborhood Safeway does more business in an afternoon.

Why so little business over the network?

Shopping over the net denies us the experience of visiting the business. There's a bookstore in Dundas, Ontario, in an old house with a water garden in the front and three resident felines. Like all real bookstores, you can browse for free and the staff won't complain. This store's atmosphere isnt available over the Internet.

Clifford Stoll, *Silicon Snake Oil: Second Thoughts on the Information Highway*, Doubleday, New York, 1995, p.18.

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

In March of 1995, the National Literacy Secretariat, with support from the British Council, sent four Canadians to the U.K. to visit sites and bring back an overview of current practice in literacy and basic skills. Linda Shohet was one of the visitors. In the last issue of *LAC*, she reported on some of the meetings. The reports in this issue were follow-ups to the March tour. A report of the NLS tour is now available from the Secretariat.

Investing in People

It was only after two managers and a union steward had mentioned that their companies were "investors in people," that I realized this was something more than a British catch-phrase.

Shortly after that, I saw an enormous billboard beside the British rail tracks just outside London with a picture of Sir John Harvey Jones, tv guru and commentator on business and training, proclaiming "I wouldn't invest in a company that didn't invest in people." At the bottom of the billboard was the title **Investors in People,** their logo and the name of the London training and enterprise council (Kilntec) sponsoring the ad.

What is Investors in People?
It is a brilliant concept for convincing employers of their responsibility and self-interest in investing in and sustaining a trained workforce. It integrates human resource development with long-term business planning as part of a national strategy to retrain the British workforce. Investors has developed four key principles [see BOX , p. 6] and 24 indicators as the basis of its standard. Organizations wishing to be recognized must undertake a formal assessment process, commit themselves to action on the findings and be reassessed at three-year intervals to maintain their recognition. Investors in People has developed a detailed set of guidelines and trained assessors across the UK to support organizations.

Project manager Sarah Pearce says that, as of summer 1995 after only four years in existence, 1800 organizations have been awarded an Investors standard. Another 16,000 have made a written commitment to engage in the asssessment process. This is a formidable achievement touching a significant proportion of the British workforce.

Chairman of the board Sir Brian Wolfson calls it is a win-win-win formula. Employers, employees and the economy all benefit from what seems on the surface a common-sense approach to training. But its simplicity is deceptive. Sir Brian talks about the political support required for a scheme like this to be effective. As a former member of a national taskforce on training in 1989, Sir Brian was one of the architects of **Investors in People** which was originally funded by the

Becoming an Investor in People

The key steps:

- understanding the Standard and its strategic implications for your organization and its plans
- diagnosing the gaps between current practice and the requirements of the Standard
- making the commitment to meet the Standard, and communicating that commitment
- planning and taking action, to bring about change
- bringing together the evidence for assessment against the Standard
- assessment
- recognition as an Investor in People
- working to keep the culture of continuous improvement alive

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

Department of Employment; a good relationship with members of all parties helped smooth the way for the non-partisan support it currently enjoys.

Since last year, Investors has been privatized, although most of its funding still comes through the Department of Employment. Its board members of employers and educators are intended to represent the quality of commitment and practice that Investors promotes.

How this relate to basic skills

Investors in People connects indirectly to basic skills, in part by making a commitment to all employees; those at the bottom are automatically included without being stigmatized in any way. It also insists that all employee groups, unionized or not, be involved in the process. These features excite people like Frances Graham at WORKBASE (p.8).

The standard is also connected to other standards such as national vocational qualifications (NVQs) creating links wherever possible, so investors can achieve several goals simultaneously.

Tom Farmer, an IIP board member and CEO of Kwik-Fit, a company of 600 muffler shops with 5500 employees, analogous to Mr. Muffler, chuckles when he talks about the IIP assessment at Kwik-Fit. He says, "We thought we were pretty good [at training]" and expected that the assessment would simply validate the

The Investors in People Standard — Four key principles

1. An Investor in People makes a public commitment from the top to develop all employees to achieve its business objectives.

- Every employee should have a written but flexible plan which sets out business goals and targets, considers how employees will contribute to achieving the plan and specifies how development needs in particular will be assessed and met.
- Management should develop and communicate to all employees a vision of where the organization is going and the contribution employees will make to its success, involving employee representatives as appropriate.

2. An Investor in People regularly reviews the training and development needs of all employees.

- The resources for training and developing employees should be clearly identified in the business plan.
- Managers should be responsible for regularly agreeing training and development needs with each employee in the context of business objectives. Targets should be set and national standards should be linked, where appropriate ...

3. An Investor in People takes action to train and develop individuals on recruitment and throughout their employment.

- Action should focus on the training needs of all new recruits and on continuously developing and improving the skills of existing employees.
- All employees should be encouraged to contribute to identifying and meeting their own job-related development needs.

4. An Investor in People evaluates the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future effectiveness.

- The investment, the competence and commitment of employees, and the use made of skills learned should be reviewed at all levels against business goals and targets.
- The effectiveness of training and development should be reviewed at the top level and lead to renewed commitment and target setting.

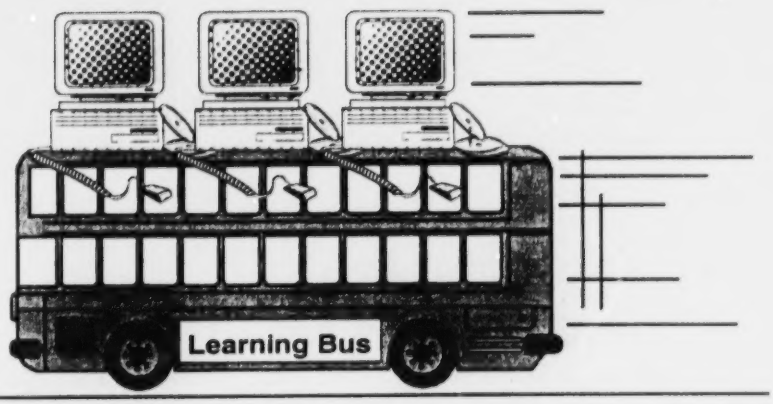
The four key principles are divided into 24 indicators and it is against these that organizations produce evidence for assessment.

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

company perception. They were rather shocked when it identified gaps and needs, including the fact that a number of employees did not clearly understand either the company or their role in it. Mr. Farmer notes that although the IIP standards focus on work-related goals, Kwik-Fit also provides opportunities for personal development which benefits the company as much as the employee.

Entreprises of every size and structure are included. The largest is Boots Chemists with 54,000 employees; the smallest, a plumbing firm of 7. If organizations are too small to do it alone, the local training and enterprise councils form consortia of similar employers. Schools and colleges are among the organizations awarded and seeking IIP accreditation, another aspect which makes the concept unique.

In 1995, Investors has begun pilot-projects in Australia and the Netherlands. They believe the concept is exportable and adaptable; however, wanting to maintain control of the quality standards and accredition process, they have copyrighted the idea and the indicators. Any country wanting to pilot the concept must work with Investors in People UK plc. [LS]



Open learning bus

A novel way of taking technology to the people, a community education group in Lewisham has outfitted a double-decker bus with 15 computers. Four tutors travel to estates (housing developments) primarily visiting women who want to learn. There are no formal classes; learners walk on and off as they wish.

The dangers of literacy

Tara MacArthur runs a storefront literacy centre in an alternative bookstore in Deptford, a deprived area of South London. The bookstore funds part of the operation. Visiting Canada this summer on a Churchill Fellowship, Tara talked about the skinheads who have been visiting the store regularly whenever a new shipment of anti-racist books arrives.

They have not threatened anyone (their presence is enough); they simply take the books off the shelf and buy them. But, a few months ago, Scotland Yard informed the store that the centre's name was found on a list kept by one of the local skinhead groups and they were advised to install alarms and take a series of precautions to protect themselves from possible attack, especially firebombs.

Tara's colleague has become ill from the stress, and Tara herself wonders how long she can sustain the pressure. This is a far remove from the stresses of literacy work most of us know in Canada.

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

Work BASE TRAINING

Since shortly after arriving in England from South Africa, Frances Graham, the exuberant Executive-Director of Workbase Training, has devoted herself to creating a model of workforce education. Workbase, a national, not-for-profit organization, is dedicated to the training and development of non-managerial employees.

Originally funded by ALBSU for 10 years of development, Workbase has been on its own since 1990. Supported by the Confederation of British Industry, the Local Government Management Board, the Trades Union Congress and other unions, Workbase Training funds itself through British and European Community grants and through direct contract work with employers. Since 1980, they have worked with over 20,000 people in more than 100 organizations.

Graham points with pride to National and Regional Training awards and to the Investors in People (IIP) Standard which they gained in 1994. Formally accredited as trainers for IIP, Workbase now works with other clients to enable them to attain this standard. As in North America, less is spent on training non-managerial workers in the U.K. than on any other group. Graham is a strong supporter of Investors in People because it is the only scheme she has ever come across that includes all workers, from basic skills level up to CEO, in its training plan.

Workbase Training Mission

- To provide exemplars, standards and available expertise to support employers and other organizations.
- To raise national awareness of the widespread problems caused by communication skills difficulties in workplaces.
- To promote a partnership approach for the development of employees.

Workbase Training Philosophy

- Working in partnership with management, trades unions and external bodies such as TEC's (Training and Entreprise Councils), and colleges.
- Customizing the approach to provide exactly what any organization and its individual employees need.
- Promoting the idea that every individual worker, no matter what job they do, has a basic right to training and development to improve their confidence at work, their skill levels and their ability to progress within the organization.

Workbase Training provides:

- a consultancy service to provide strategic advice and guidance on communications skills at work.
- an Investor in People consultancy service to provide support to organizations seeking to achieve the Investor in People Standard.
- a research and training needs analysis service to identify, measure and evaluate communication skills needs within an organization or area.
- a training service to meet the needs of employees. All training takes place on the organization's premises, at the most appropriate time and place, to fit in with shift patterns and the location of individuals.
- a support service for managers, supervisors and others to ensure that improvements in the basic skills of the workforce bring real and lasting benefits.

Open learning centres/customization

Workbase has pioneered a flexible and open access approach to reduce barriers to learning such as shift work or problems of releasing staff. They have also developed the WORKBASE TOOLKIT designed for managers and human resources staff to introduce a strategy for staff training and development.

Proposal writing and materials development have taken so much of Graham's and her staff's time that they have not published their materials for a larger market. But the care and research accorded to each client is apparent from flipping through the customized binders in their resource room. Aeronautics is the focus of a binder prepared for one client in the aerospace industry; kosher food preparation is at the core of another designed for a Jewish care facility. All the materials can lead to accreditation for workers who want or need it.

Information: Frances Graham, Executive Director, Workbase Training, 67a High Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6BH. Tel: 181-889-8991; Fax: 181-889-6233

Positioning Literacy – the U.K. experience

The New Reading Disc

A highlight of my spring visit to the U.K. was finding *The New Reading Disc*, the most exciting piece of adult literacy software I have seen developed anywhere. Cambridge Training and Development advertises it as "a multimedia training resource for language and literacy designed to help adults learn to read through writing." Its most outstanding feature is the respect it accords teachers and students.

It works from the premise that beginning readers are not beginning thinkers, that people with reading difficulties are often expert language users when they are talking or listening, but have a specific problem with written language.

Developed in the UK with funding from the UK Employment

Department, the original *Reading Disc* won the Award for Best Educational CD at the 1991 European Multimedia Event. *The New Reading Disc* has added new features including the power to customize the content to individual needs.

The Disc allows learners to create their own text by selecting words and sentences (with the support of audio) and to choose subjects of interest (with the support of pictures and video). They can print their work and practice reading the piece they have created.

The disc has three sets of activities and exercises. Learners can create arguments, write articles or letters. The exercises can be used on the computer or printed out and used as worksheets. Built on the database of words and sentences already in the the system, the generic exercises include sentence completion, cloze procedure, dictation, map reading, alphabetic sorting and comprehension.

Highlight: the Author

For anyone outside the U.K., perhaps the most pertinent feature of *The New Reading Disc* is the author tool that allows teachers to customize material to their own place and situation by adding new sections, exercises, sound, pictures and video on any subject.

North American debut

This summer the disc was introduced in North America. In June, Martin Good, one of the developers, attended the Summer Institute on Literacy Learning and New Technology at The Centre in Montreal. The reaction was spontaneous and overwhelming. Participants were smitten by the possibilities of this software. In August, Martin elicited a similar response at the Adult Literacy and Technology conference in Philadelphia. To a field hungry for thoughtful teaching materials, this disc epitomized the best of what technology might offer. However, as Martin kept reminding listeners, it is finally not the technology or the software, but still the teacher who determines how learning happens.

Now it's for the field to respond. [LS]

Seeking Canadian Test-sites for *The New Reading Disc* A multi-media resource for language and literacy

The Centre for Literacy is coordinating a Canadian evaluation of*The New Reading Disc*. We are looking for test sites across Canada, about three per province/territory— in community-based literacy programs, in formal programs, in community college developmental programs and in workplace upgrading programs.

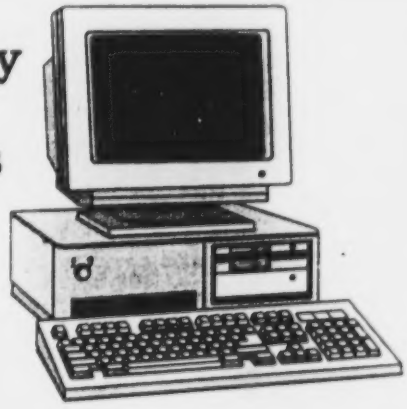
What we want to know

- Can instructors effectively integrate a resource like *The New Reading Disc* into their teaching environment?
- How do teachers and learners at various levels and in various learning environments respond to the disc?
- Is there interest in training Canadian teachers/trainers to use the Author tool to create culturally appropriate materials for various regions and settings?

Testers will complete a 3-4 page evaluation form.

For information on requirements to become a test site, call **514-931-8731, local 1415.**

Computer Technology Survey of Ontario Adult Literacy Programs



Background

Following the January 1995 policy conversation on new technology hosted by the National Literacy Secretariat and The Centre for Literacy in Montreal, the three Ontario participants realized that they did not know the current status of computer technology in Ontario programs.

To begin provincial planning and to respond to federal initiatives, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board's (OTAB), Literacy Section decided to gather reliable information from the field on the extent to which computers are presently used, as well as on possible future uses of technology. First, many key issues were identified through an electronic focus group called 'newtech' on AlphaCom which took place over a three-week period before the Montreal meetings (see *LAC* Winter 1995, p. 4). Second, in June and July of 1995, a computer technology survey was sent to all French and English literacy programs in Ontario.

The final report of this survey will be available in early October. Preliminary survey results are presented below, as summarized by Mike Kelly of Ottawa, based on responses from 137 English literacy programs. Data from Francophone literacy organizations is currently being compiled. The final report expects to include data on an additional 60 organizations.

The major findings indicate that technology is used widely in literacy programs in Ontario and that there is both willingness to learn new technologies as well as a need for more resources.

Preliminary highlights

- **Obstacles inhibiting the expansion of computer technology use**

  Lack of financial support to purchase computers is seen as the strongest and most common obstacle followed by lack of time for staff to learn how to use computers. Respondents did not think that staff/instructor resistance to using computers was a significant obstacle.

Advantages to use of computers include:

- providing greater incentives for learners
- allowing learners to move at their own pace
- increasing learner control over the learning experience
- providing students with non-threatening feedback

Extent of student access to computer technology

- 37% offer one or fewer hours of computer-based instruction per week.
- 50% offer between one and five hours.
- 8% offer between five and 10 hours.
- 5% offer more than 10 hours.

Use of electronic communications for staff and students.

- 74% of respondents use AlphaCom (CoSy) for mail and electronic conferencing.
- 13% connect electronically to Alpha Ontario.
- 12% are connected to the Internet.
- 5 % use Telnet.
- 5 % use Gopher.
- 5 % use the World Wide Web.
- 2% connect to NALD.

Future development

The most important future computer technology development for the field of literacy was relevant software.

A copy of the final report will be available in early October from The Literacy Section, Employment Preparation Branch, OTAB, 625 Church Street, 3rd floor, Toronto, On, M4Y 2E8.

Attention Nafees Sayeed.
Tel: (416) 326-5474
Fax: (416) 326-5505

VOL 5 No. 2 SUMMER 1995

MediaFOCUS

THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY

As the body of research into media education grows, it takes on fascinating dimensions which have already altered perceptions of communication, information and learning. David Buckingham of the Institute of Education, London, England has been an important influence in media education and curriculum development. In Montreal in 1994, the author interviewed him for her graduate research. What follows are some of Buckingham's thoughts on media education as expressed in that interview.

Media and its place in the curriculum

When most elementary and secondary schools began addressing media education, the English curriculum seemed the appropriate place to situate it. However, as the discussion evolves, new questions arise. When asked to comment, Buckingham prefers to discuss a revised version of English which would negate both the current notion of literacy as well as distinctions between books, print and other media. He stresses that the impact of the new technologies makes that notion of media studies quite arcane and argues for a subject at the core of the curriculum concerned with literacy and culture in their broadest sense.

While the English curriculum in Canada has traditionally upheld established canons, British experience seems to differ. Buckingham describes a system where a number of different versions of English co-exist, and individual teachers incorporate these versions in their practice in contention or harmony. He identifies two distinct versions of English: the first, progressive—a kind of personal growth version from the 60s. The second—more typical of the 70s—a somewhat radical notion of English as empowering working class people by giving them radical knowledge. The two versions deal with both skills and cultural heritage. Buckongham prefers to see them as *continuities*, because, for him, the cultural heritage version underlies both so that even the self-professed radical teacher will often have the same suspicion of media as the more progressive teacher, albeit for different reasons.

The discussion, he says, ought to consider what English and media education do effectively and where they fall short. For Buckingham, English does not have a problem with production, but media education does. In English, there is "space" built into the program for students to write and to talk about subjective investments: here, feeling and pleasure have a place, whereas in media, providing space to produce is often problematic.

English, however, does not allow for a reflective mood. It is about reading and writing, not about asking students to reflect on these processes as they engage in them. That, to Buckingham, is the crux of media education for it actually asks students to revel in that moment of stepping back and reflecting on what they have produced. Media education attempts to draw on the model of learning that asks students to link practice and theory and to see things in social terms. English tends to work with individualistic notions of reading and writing—reading is personal response and writing is personal expression.

Why talk about literacy?

Buckingham is enthusiastic about the possibility of expanding media education and English together. That must involve developing both a critique and a theoretical base of English, as well as some reflection on the limitations of media education. For him, this ongoing argument brings the discussion to the topic of literacy which is, in fact, the discussion he prefers to be having because English is so centrally concerned with big issues related to language and culture.

To talk about English as something separate and on its own, Buckhingham said, is not only an impoverished kind of argument but is also out of step with the experiences of young people. Pointing to a growing body

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

Review: Cultural Studies Goes to School p. 5

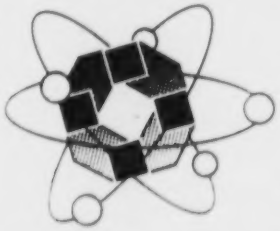
Prime Time Parent Workshop Kit p. 7

Media Focus

is a supplement to **Literacy Across the Curriculum** published four times a year by **The Centre for Literacy, Inc**
3040 Sherbrooke St. West,
Montreal, Quebec,
Canada, H3Z 1A4
Tel: (514) 931-8731, Ext 1415

Editor
Linda Shohet
Supplement editor
Judy Brandeis
Layout & design
Pon©tu@t!on GRAFIX

The Centre for Literacy/Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.



Literacy for the 21st century
Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of work on literacy that says we need to see it in social terms. he cites Shirley Brice Heath and Brian Street and refers to the traditional psychological research on tv literacy which looks at how kids understand the meaning of formal features of television. The problem he sees here is that it abstracts questions about meaning and presents a "bottom-up notion about literacy" which suggests that you acquire basic skills and from that, construct meaning. He likens this to a "kind of phonics approach to tv literacy."

Redefining media literacy
Although Buckingham considers the term"media literacy" problematic, he goes on using it because it is polemical. It makes a claim that some-thing high status, namely literacy, should be associ-ated with something low status, namely media. The term also assures that discussion of media education will reach English teachers which is critical since this discussion is really about revising notions of how we teach about culture or literacy.

The term also focuses attention on what students know and what they bring rather than on what they should be taught. However, Buckingham is quick to warn about practical and theoretical problems in extending notions of literacy from print to media. He cautions against locating media on the level of basic skills, stressing that very different skills are required for decoding print as opposed to decoding tv. Most youngsters, he says, know how to decode tv by the age of three, whereas many will have great difficulty in decoding print.

The role of the teacher
The British experience over the last ten years has been on institutionalizing media education. As a result of successful lobbying, it has gotten *in there* in the curriculum. Buckingham sees this as a victory, however fears that it can lead to a kind of complacency. For him, having media education in curriculum documents is no good whatsoever unless there is training and support for teachers. One of the problems he sees is that many are nearly or totally illiterate in the area of computers and new technologies.

He points also to the reluctance of some teachers to bring computers and the media into the classroom as study objects because they are objects with which the students are more familiar than their teachers are. That, he says, poses problems in terms of the teacher's role. The English literature class is largely an enterprise about teachers giving students access to something presumed to be difficult; almost anything teachers do with literature is assumed to be valid. That, he goes on, seems not to be the case with media because it is assumed to be so familiar. However, Buckingham would argue that there are some texts in media that students do find difficult and he would want to find a place for these in the curriculum.

This may well be a power issue, and Buckingham is not comfortable with the assumption that, when it comes to the media, students are the experts and what we need to do is to reverse the power relations in the classroom. This, he feels, is not now, and never will be, a realistic portrait of the classroom. Further, he notes, even teachers who are not experts in the media can ask questions and set up activities for their students that *will* make a difference to how they read the texts. He is careful not to suggest that he is identifying the teacher as the fount of knowledge; however nor does he want to reinforce the assumption that all students are experts at the same thing.

What is so inspiring about Buckingham's work is that he continues to question and debate issues. Perhaps because he favours a kind of evolution of ideas, he argues that theory can be built by teachers from the bottom up and the accepted version of what media education is needs to be constantly revised in light of people's experiences rather than as a set of stone tablets. [J.B.]

For a review of Buckingham's latest book, *Cultural Studies Goes to School*, *see p. 5.*

Buckingham's analogy

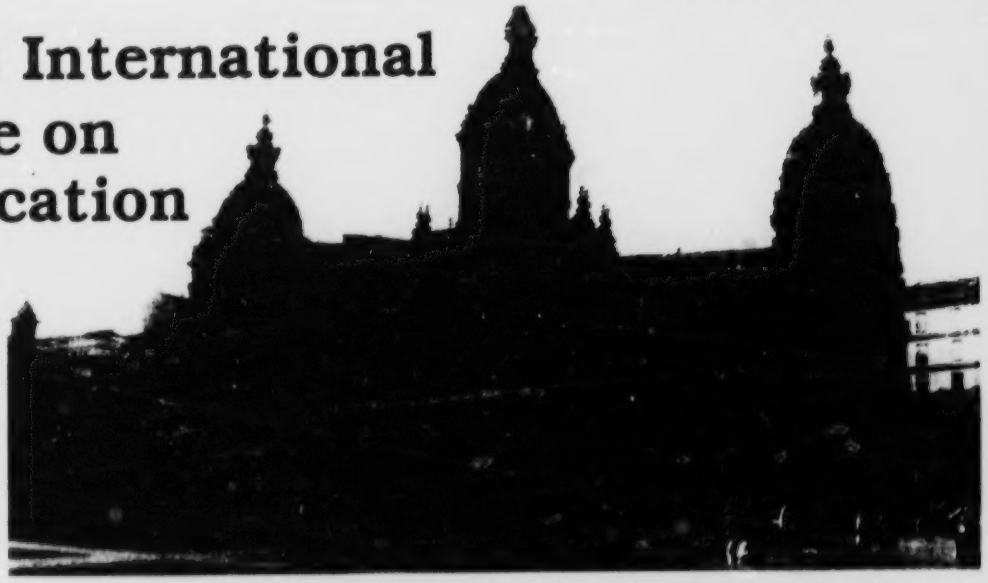
Higher order skills - a potential transfer between the competencies children develop through watching tv and those they develop in terms of print.

The higher order skills of tv literacy relate to how children
- learn to make sense of narratives;
- make judgements about the relation between tv and reality;
- categorize the range of texts they come across;
- and hypothese about motivations of producers.

Spain 1995: International Conference on media education

A report and personal reflections

By Winston G. Emery



The Mayor's Palace at Da Coruna University in Spain was one of the many sites where conference receptions were held.

The fourth International Conference on the Pedagogics of Representation, held from July 3 - 8, 1995, at the Universidade Da Coruna, Spain, was a conference of media educators and professionals, mostly from Spanish-speaking countries, organized by the Nova Escola Galega and the Escola de Imaxe e Son de Galicia. Each year this group meets for almost a week. This year, a series of meetings of media educators from around the world was organized by Jose Maria Aguilera Carrasco (Galicia), Roberto Aparici (Spain) and Robyn Quin (Australia) to run concurrent with the conference. The meetings allowed media educators from over twenty countries to focus on issues of media education research, pedagogy, curriculum and best practice.

I was impressed with the wealth of information and expertise available in media education. Conferences such as this give media educators valuable opportunities to contact their world colleagues. I have begun to understand how others proceed in media education outside of the Anglo-American context, and I now understand more of the historical context and current social influences on media education in Europe, South and Central America.

From the contributions of my Central and South American colleagues, I was intrigued by the extent to which media education is located in popular, adult education. I sensed, too, the power of ideology as a vital concept used to help people develop their critical abilities in order to effect political change. I found this to be a refreshing difference from the Anglo-American mode in which being critical seems much more of an academic pursuit than a socially committed one.

It is also my impression that there is a need for media education to develop a larger body of research to inform and generate appropriate educational practice, and ascertain its richness. An interesting example of this type of research is the Models of Media Education project directed by Andrew Hart.

The purposes of the conference were to:

- develop teachers' awareness of the need to include media education and the use of audiovisual technology into the curriculum.
- contribute to teacher training in media education and the uses of audiovisual media in education.
- provide opportunities for media educators from different countries to present and share their experiences in media education and the use of audiovisual technology.
- showcase professional-, teacher-, and student-produced audiovisual projects created for teaching purposes or as a result of particular teaching methodologies.
- present state-of-the-art technology in audiovisual teaching.

The world meetings provided a much-needed view of the state of media education around the world. Common concerns included:

- where to locate media education;
- the role of the media professional in media education;
- the basic elements of media education;
- and the need for better and systematic research to inform theory and practice.

BOX

WHO WAS THERE?

Selected presenters

Mario Kaplun (Uruguay), Robin Quin and Barrie McMahon (Australia), Barry Duncan (Canada), Roberto Aparici (Spain), Robert Ferguson, Bob Kubey, Susan Court, Robert Morgan, Kathleen Tyner, and Karon Sherarts (USA).

Round table/panel discussions with

Jose Luis Olivari (Chile), Susanne Krucsay (Austria), Costa Criticos (South Africa), John Pungente (Canada) and Alexander Sharikov (Russia); Len Masterman (UK), Guillermo Orozco (Mexico), Kathleen Tyner (USA), Augustin Matilla (Spain), Anton Rexia (Galicia), Andrew Hart (UK); Cary Bazalgette (UK), Miguel Reyes (Chile), Rick Shepherd (Canada), Antonio Campuzano (Spain).

Selected workshop leaders

Winston Emery, Ana Graviz and Jorge Pozo, Mario Kaplun, Marieli Rowe Robyn Quin and Barrie McMahon, Andrew Hart, Bob Ferguson and Costas Criticos.

Winston Emery (third row, third from left) and his workshop.

International Conference logo

The project, which began in the region surrounding Southhampton, England, addressed the questions of how English teachers in the UK taught media, the media's relative merit as a study in its own right, theories that informed their practices, their own teaching goals and methods. The researchers used the methodologies of the structured interview with teachers and systematic observation of classroom teaching.

More such empirical studies are necessary if we are to understand the "state-of-the-art" of media teaching and find direction. Also needed are in-depth investigations of how teachers' attitudes, values and life experiences influence their pedagogy. Bob Morgan of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education provided us with a model approach to such research. Adequate theoretical frameworks need to be developed in order to evaluate media education approaches and curricula. Jose Martinez provided an interesting example of "paper research" as he developed a set of descriptors of teaching methodologies used in media education classrooms.

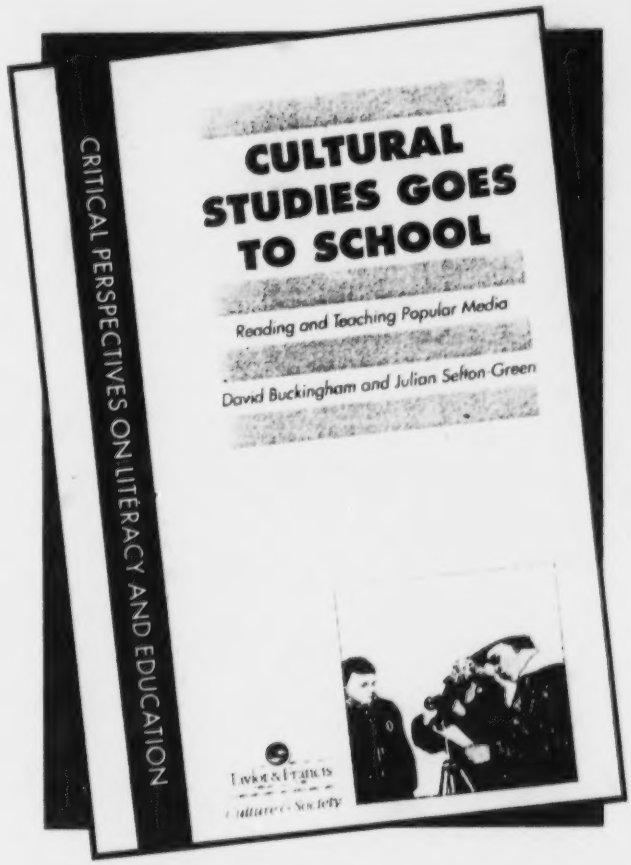
Like many participants, I felt a need to maintain and develop the contact with media educators that was established there. At the world meetings, the assembled group attempted to find ways to establish an international network of media educators. Several participants volunteered to investigate the possibility of an e-mail network for communication; other possibilities include a clearinghouse for information on media education and research, a vehicle of publication, and future conferences.

Winston G. Emery is a member of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, McGill University.

Reviews
Cultural Studies Goes to School

By David Buckingham and Julian Sefton-Green . Taylor and Francis. (London, England, 1995) 217 pp.
reviewed by Winston G. Emery

"Ultimately what lies at the heart of our investigation is a deep skepticism about the role of academic theory, and its claim to serve as the privileged means of social change. Academics in Cultural Studies have often been keen to carve out dramatic political roles for themselves — yet they have rarely shown more than a token interest in the processes by which their students might learn theory, or make sense of it in terms of their own lived experiences." (p. 208)


CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON LITERACY AND EDUCATION
CULTURAL STUDIES GOES TO SCHOOL
Reading and Teaching Popular Media
David Buckingham and Julian Sefton-Green

Cultural Studies Goes to School is an attempt by its authors to assume a Cultural Studies stance while avoiding its excessive "theoreticism" by considering the relationships between theories and lived experiences with regard both to the students they taught and to themselves as teachers.

With, at times, their tongues firmly planted in their cheeks, and, assuming the critical stance that a media education is supposed to engender, Buckingham and Sefton-Green give us a fascinating account of a group of young people from an ethnically diverse, working-class secondary school in North East London, as they read and wrote popular culture in school.

The book describes the students' experiences of media education within the formal school curriculum and connects these experiences to the adolescents' involvement in popular culture outside school, revealing the complexity of their interaction with it.

The book is divided into two parts. Part one expands notions of reading and writing to include other media products — as texts appropriate for students in classrooms. It also reconsiders what it means to "read" and "write." Part two explores theories that underlie both the nature of media education and appropriate pedagogical practices for the study of culture in classrooms.

The introductory chapter situates the study in terms of its purpose, its context and the variety of forms of information from which to describe teacher and student behaviour (See BOX). In chapter two, "Making sense of the media: from reading to culture," the authors discuss some of the major theoretical considerations which form the basis of the media education curricula they implemented and which influenced the stance they took in describing its effects on the students they studied. Essentially, they offer an account of reading which considers that making sense of the media is a process in which both individual and collective identities are defined and negotiated.

On the basis of an extensive survey of students' media use and of interviews with students about what they "read," Buckingham and Sefton-Green present interesting findings about the social circulation of meaning. What they discovered was that the students (and we, too, for that matter), in making meaning, and in establishing their own tastes and preferences, were defining the meanings of their own social lives and positions. This process of reading is characterized by considerable diversity and complexity.

The diversity and complexity are explored in the next three chapters. Chapter 3, "A boy's own story: writing masculine genres" is an analysis of a 6000-word story written by a Year 10 student who calls himself "Ponyboy" after the hero in the S.E. Hinton novel, *The*

BOX

Cultural Studies Goes to School

The purpose:
The authors research their own practice as teachers in order to encourage reflection and improvement in teaching.

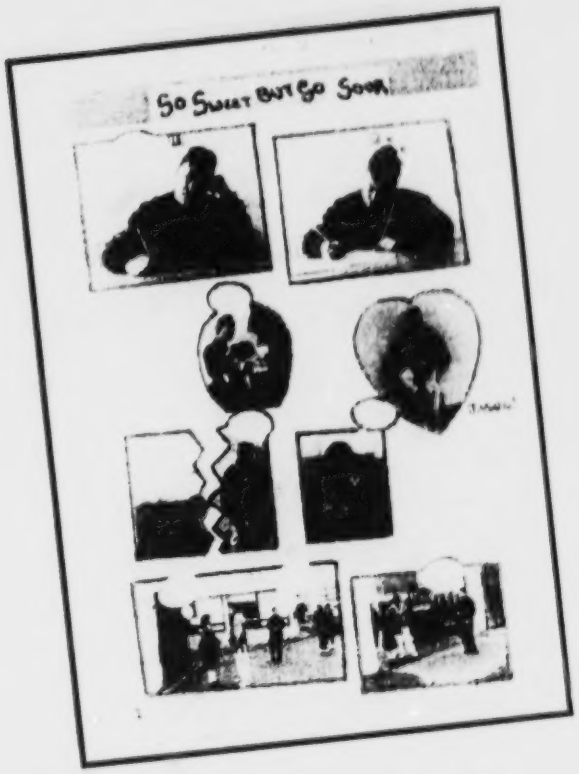
The context:
David Buckingham, a university teacher and researcher, worked with Julian Sefton-Green, a teacher/researcher at a comprehensive secondary school in Tottenham, North London, to teach media studies to groups of students from ethnically mixed working-class and generally materially deprived community. The study lasted over four years.

The forms of information from which they describe teacher and student behaviour
- observation,
- individual and small-group interviews,
- surveys,
- students' productions in a range of media and their written reflections on their work.

Outsiders). Chapter 4, "Hardcore rappin': popular music, identity and critical discourse" examines the social functions served by texts produced by students in response to units they were studying on popular music. The texts included videos to accompany a song; album and cassette covers based on a selection of music; and music magazines and radio program excerpts, each aimed at particular target audiences. Chapter 5, "The 'me' in the picture is not me: photography as writing" discusses how two photography assignments allowed students to explore the relationships between the subjective and the social.

Part one concludes with a reconceptualization of the students as both an audience of popular culture and as researchers into their own activities as producers of, and audiences for, popular culture texts (Chapter 6). It examines students' awareness of audience on the basis of their having conducted surveys of audience tastes, use of media and consumption of media products.

In part two, the authors explore curriculum and pedagogical theory inherent in the approaches they used in the media studies classroom. Chapter 7 elaborates and problematizes the similarities and differences between English and Media studies using interviews with students about their perceptions of these two school subjects to highlight the discussion. Chapter 8 looks at the process of evaluation in media education in the light of Vygotskyan learning theory. The authors adopt a stance toward evaluation which encourages (teachers and) students to make explicit, to reformulate and to



An example from Chapter 5, using photography to explore the differences between the subjective and the social.

question, not only new knowledge ("scientific concepts"), but also the knowledge they already possess ("spontaneous concepts").

Chapter 9, "Going critical," studies the critical development of a student as revealed in his essays in English and Media Studies over a period of three years. It raises the question of what it means for students to acquire a critical perspective and explores how this critical behaviour is manifested, and shaped by, the discourse community in which it occurs. Chapter 10 extends the argument begun in the previous chapter: that being critical ought to be considered, perhaps, as both a state of mind and as a social practice. It may not be a simple process that can be deduced from an outward form of critical writing; but may also be found in the variety of forms of practical work students produce.

Being literate in a postmodern world

The final chapter of the book is a consideration of what it means to be literate in a post-modern society. Buckingham and Sefton-Green argue for the need to reconceptualize not only traditional notions of culture and literacy, but also approaches to teaching about them. Teachers must begin by recognizing that students bring considerable and complex cultural experiences and competencies which are, by and large, neglected at school.

This is important work in several ways. For teacher-researchers, it serves as a model of useful research practice in studying the implementation of media education in classrooms by validating several forms of data that have only recently become of interest to researchers: teachers' descriptions of what they do; student productions; and students' reflections about their learning and work. It also shows us how a cultural studies stance may be brought to bear on the description of what students do in media education classes. The book provides rich speculation about the complex behaviour engendered by production and analysis of media texts.

For media teachers, the book provides models of good teaching practice and, through the vignettes of student behaviour and talk, gives some idea of the nature of student responses to the activities. The authors also present the problems teachers typically face in implementing such practices. In grounding their theoretical discussion in the reality of the school, the authors effectively establish their credibility with a teacher audience.

For cultural studies types, the book goes a considerable way toward showing how a cultural studies perspective, were it grounded in the reality of schools, could be of real use to educators, enabling them to provide rich descriptions not only of the complex web of experiences that students bring to schools, but also of what they learn and what they bring to bear on that learning. At the same time, the authors show how cultural studies might extricate itself from its excessive theoreticism and its intensely self-reflexive pre-occupation.

Winston G. Emery is a member of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, McGill University.

Prime Time Parent Media Literacy Workshop Kit

The Alliance for Children and Television, 1995
Videos and print materials

As the media become a more familiar context for learning, it becomes increasingly evident that the home is a significant environment for this learning to take place. Few Canadian homes are without at least one tv, and more often than not, a VCR. With tv playing such a key role in family life, many parents and caregivers feel ill-equipped to participate in children's relationships with tv and the other mass media.

The Alliance for Children and Television (ACT) wants to help parents and caregivers make their children's experience with tv positive. ACT's first initiative was a print guide for parents entitled *Minding the Set!* (See Reviews, *Media Focus*, Vol. 4 No.3) produced in conjunction with Rogers Cablesystems. ACT's newest initiative is a much-needed workshop kit designed especially for use by parents and caregivers of young children in their own environments. Traditionally, the school or some other institution has presented "expert" information for parents. This kit encourages them to exploit their own expertise and become the presenters.

Prime Time Parent comprises easy-to-use video and print materials for the neophyte facilitator. Workshop materials address nine issues related to tv, as well as tips on Warm-ups and Pro-Action, and although the kit is especially appropriate for elementary-aged children, activities can be easily adapted for older viewers.[See BOX]

Producers have been sensitive to the fact that most parents have never been workshop leaders and are probably apprehensive about taking the plunge. They have also recognized that workshop participants like to leave with something in their hands, and that preparing handouts is a tedious task even for the seasoned facilitator. They include handouts to photocopy and distribute.

ACT has taken a groundbreaking approach in recognizing the importance of the new technologies as they relate to the media. Few other media education materials make this connection

Another striking feature is that the video clips use almost exclusively Canadian programs, which many facilitators will welcome. Others, however, may miss some of the American content our children watch so frequently.

All the components have been carefully designed to complement one another, making it extremely user-friendly. The attractive and convenient package adds to the appeal. The kit, also available in French under the title *Chère tele*, will be distributed to school boards and resource centres across the country and available for loan to interest groups. Concerned parents, caregivers and teachers are encouraged to take advantage of a Canadian resource of which we can all be proud. [JB]

The kit is now available for loan free of charge in both English and French at The Centre for Literacy The Centre will be offering an informal workshop and information session to familiarize parents, caregivers and community workers with Prime Time Parent. *See News and Notes p. 6.*

Quick guide to *Prime-Time Parent*

• Print materials
Three easy-to -consult print guides are uniformin design, but distinct in purpose:

The **Training Manual** begins with an explanation of the kit and an introduction, followed by a step-by-step approach to facilitating a workshop. Screens, lists and graphics make this information quite accessible.

The **Backgrounder** provides a series of two-page overviews to accompany each of the nine modules in the kit: Child Development, TV and Families,Television Violence, Advertising, Values, Stereotyping, Television production, New technology and Television Programming.

30 Activity Cards, colour coded, again address the nine modules. The front of each indicates the estimated time of activity will take, the goal and materials needed. The reverse side provides a step-by-step approach.

• Video materials
There are two videos:

Training, an 18-minute video offers visual recreation of information outlined in the Training Manual including how to conduct a workshop and how to deal with potential difficulties. Although at times slightly exaggerated, it can be helpful.

Clips Video, intended for use with the Activity Cards, is the portion of the kit which will require the most preparation: while the Activity Cards are numbered, workshop leaders will note that this numerical code does not correspond to the on-screen numbers on the video clips. This is somewhat misleading at first, but the correct procedure will quickly become clear if facilitators read instructions on the Activity Cards carefully.

News & Notes

Workshops: An Informal Introduction to *Prime Time Parent*

Television has both positive and negative influences on children, and parents need non-judgmental, fact-based information in order to guide their children's viewing.

Animator: Judy Brandeis
Date: Wed. October 11, 1995
Time: 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Place: Dawson College.

This session will introduce parents and teachers to a new media literacy resource put out by the Alliance for Children and Television to provide basic information and promote discussion.
Information: The Centre for Literacy.
Tel: (514) 931-8731, local 1415

The National Media Literacy Conference

September 22 - 24, 1995
Broyhill Centre, Appalachian State University
Boone, North Carolina
Information: Dr. David Considine, National Media Literacy Conference, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608 Phone: (704) 262-2270; Fax: (704) 262-2686

- Robert Kubey, Associate Professor of Communication at Rutgers University has been named Research Director of the Media Education Laboratory in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts at Rutgers, Newark. He will be spending the 1995-96 academic year on sabbatical in the Department of Communication at Stanford.

Screening images Chris Worsnop Turns Theory to Practice

Saturday, November 4, 1995
Cost: $85.00
(includes lunch and materials)

The Centre for Literacy
4001 de Maisonneuve Blvd.
Information: The Centre for Literacy
Tel: (514) 931-8731 local 1415

- David Buckingham will be Visiting Scholar at the Annenberg School for Communications in Philadelphia from September 1, 1995 - June 30, 1996.

- *Media Education in 1990's Europe A teacher's guide* by Len Masterman and François Mariet is now available at The Centre for Literacy.

Letter to the editor

The following is an excerpt of an e-mail message posted by Pat Kipping of the Literacy Section, Nova Scotia Department of Education, in response to "Turned off, tuned out - left out" (Media Focus, Spring 1995,Vol. 5, No. 1) The message has been edited for length.

Ms. Kipping writes:
I just read your article and I'm afraid I have to disagree with your strong reaction against TV Free America's initiative and your description of what it means.

I think TV Free America's approach is extreme if they are hoping people will actually STOP watching tv altogether. We are all in this mass together and have been well trained by numerous sources including the mass media to see things in dualistic, oppositional terms. We don't need to. I think TV Free America is a sharp thin edge of the wedge. The rest of us are somewhere farther back at the wider parts but we are all pushing in the same direction to make an opening and shed some light on this major, complex area of tv and its role in our lives.

I don't like the tv-as drug metaphor any more than you do, but sometimes you've got to start with the metaphor that is on the mind of those you are trying to reach. My favourite metaphor, though, is of a RETREAT. A TV RETREAT. Many people use retreats not as a way to get rid of something bad in their lives, but to get a new perspective, to reflect on and renew their relationship with their everyday lives. People who go on retreats don't think of their lives as "bad". They just know that when you get too immersed in something you can lose perspective—critical perspective and enjoyment.

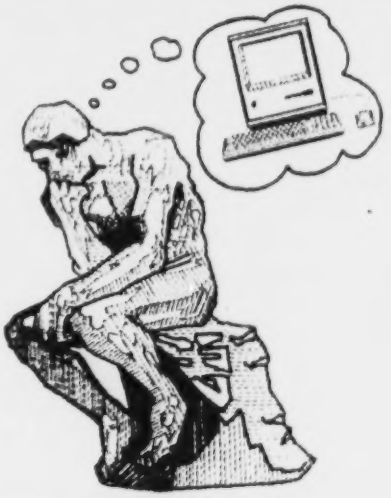
I agree with you that parents and children should watch more tv together, but together is the operative word. I like to focus of the London initiative in creating "stay at home family viewing", but I find the family sponsorship and tie in with eating junk food to be appalling.

I think there is no better way to understand the mass media culture we swim in everyday than to remove ourselves from it occasionally. Balance, perspective, reflection, renewed commitment and enjoyment– that's what we seek when we go on a retreat. It's possible to do with tv and still advocate critical media literacy education and practices.

An article by Pat Kipping will appear in the next issue of ***Media Focus****.*

Policy conversation on new technologies and literacy

In January 1995, the National Literacy Secretariat held a policy conversation on literacy and new technologies with 25 participants from across Canada. The background to this exchange appeared in the Winter 1995 issue of *LAC*. The purpose of the meeting was to identify and react to issues and problems related to the use of technology in literacy work. While the group was not developing policy at that time and was not asked to reach consensus, the outcomes of the discussions are being fed into the current process of developing an NLS policy on technology support.



The meeting did agree on a number of guiding principles which it beleived should underly future Canadian policy. These are summarized below.

1. Learner needs are central
Learner needs must be central to whatever policy is developed. Learner needs are also inextricably linked to equity of access and opportunity.

2. Practitioners need support
We must ensure that practioners have the kinds of training, the types of material support, and the research into best methods they need to deal with the possibilities offered by the diverse existing and emerging technologies.

3. Technology is simply a tool...
Technology is simply a tool to be used for human learning ends.. It's very easy to become a captive of the technology, fascinated by the elegance of the machines and the creative software that accompanies a given platform. Commentators talk about the new invisible hand of technology shaping late 20th century societies, an updating of Adam Smith's invisible hand of the market at the beginning of the industrial revolution. The new technological invisible hand influences learning and culture.

... but there is a range of tools
In considering the implications of technology for literacy there is a need to recognize the range of technological instruments available to us. We should not simply become fascinated by the so-called "new technologies" that are currently in the public eye. Traditional ways of doing things that are important and valuable need not be rejected in favour of the new. There are "traditional technologies" in the process of being transformed in ways we never imagined. The telephone and the television are being reinvented. The key is that we use whatever tools we choose appropriately.

4. We must invest wisely...
We have to take care not to waste scarce resources, not to chase phantom solutions but to consider carefully what we want and need. The value of reflecting on best practice is essential. Research is an important guide in identifying needs, opportunities, best practice, and the selection of appropriate technologies.

5. Training is a key element...
Training is a key element in the succesful use of technology. There was a suggestion that future projects supported by the NLS should have a training element, ensured either in the way we elicit proposals or in terms of our funding requirement.

6. Literacy is a spectrum of diverse needs...
It is important to think about literacy in broad terms, as a spectrum of needs and abilities, as more than purely reading and writing, to encompass thinking skills, problem-solving, and communications abilities.

7. Link literacy to a range of related areas of public policy
In addition to the policy areas we have discussed there are challenges in terms of social, cultural and citizenship policies, health care, and administration of justice and penal reform.

8. Stable funding is important...
The effective use of technology for literacy purposes is linked to stable funding of literacy organizations and projects.

The full report on the January meeting is available in English and French from the National Literacy Secretariat, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1K5. Tel: (819) 953-5280. Fax: (819) 953-8076.

Technology, family literacy and ESL

Lighting Up Literacy: Demonstrating the compatability of technology with Famly Literacy and ESL

by Virginia Tardaewether, Family Literacy Instructor, Salem OR

Virginia Tardaewether teaches in a family literacy program in Salem Oregon. Working with colleague, Lucy Tribble MacDonald, affectionately known in electronic circles as "litlucy," Virginia has integrated computer use into many aspects of the program from the parent's time learning alone to the parent-child time together (PACT). She and Lucy presented on August 5 at the Adult Literacy and Technology conference in Philadelphia. The classrom activities below are a sampler. A book-length publication is due out this fall. [L.S.]

These are a series of actual asignments given during adult basic skills class for parent support time class. Each assignment has a different purpose and a different time line. Becoming familiar with and comfortable using a computer is one goal for these ESL and ABE parents.

ASSIGNMENT 1

CHILDREN'S COMPUTER SOFTWARE EXERCISE
Work with a partner (this partner can be your child) and EACH OF YOU (if your partner is an adult) complete the following):

A. Monsters & Make Believe
1. Create a "monster" (Save as onto your disk)
2. Write a short story about your monster. (Save)
3. Print out your monster and story. (Turn in)

B. Amanda Stories—Indigo
1. Select an Indigo story. Follow the buttons through the story.
2. Using word processor, write a story about Indigo's actions.
3. Save onto your disk, print, turn in.

C. Rainy Day Games
1. Open Rainy Day Games and Select a game Concentration, Old Maid, Go Fish
2. With your partner, play EACH game long enough to understand how it works.
3. Using word processor, describe what your child will learn from each game.
4. Save onto your disk, print, turn in.

D. Software of Your Choice
1. Let your child pick another software to play with you. Playroom, Kid Pix, etc.
2. Play for awhile. Have fun!
3. Write down the kinds of things you talked about while you were playing together.

ASSIGNMENT 2

DRAW DRAW DRAW
1. Find a partner.
2. Draw a picture using MacPaint and/or the Draw On and Draw Off function.
3. Do a pattern in one or more sections of the figure you draw.
4. Print your final project.
5. Due: The end of the day today.

ASSIGNMENT 3

CLASS BOOK
Select a favorite song, chant, nursery rhyme, story, etc. Using the computer and scanner, write the words and illustrate the item of your choice. Use one page for your selection and we will create a class book for you to take home and share with your family. Your children could choose the drawings and the item to be included.
We will need to cooperate as a class so that the same item is not printed up more than once. You may decide to do more than one item if you have more than one favorite that no one else has selected.

ASSIGNMENT 4

PACT PIE CHART
Keep track of your PACT (Parent and Child Together) activities for the entire month. Using spreadsheet, make a chart of activities. List each type of activity and the number of times you and your child did that activity. Fill in the formula on the spreadsheet (make sure you include days you were absent in your total and as one activity.

Example:	
Read	5
Puzzles	2
Blocks	4
Absent	1
Total	12

After you have completed your data entry, written your formula (Sum = a+b+c+d). Save this chart onto your disk. Label it: PACT Plans for (Month). Print a copy for your family portfolio.

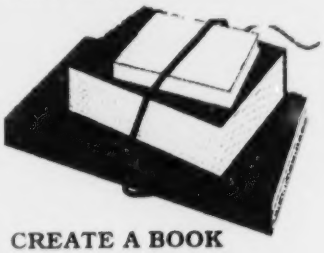
ASSIGNMENT 5

JOURNAL AND HYPERCARD
How to get a picture from Hypercard to a word proessing page.

1. Open Hypercard.
2. Open idea stacks.
3. Open art ideas.
4. Find the picture you would like to have on your scrapbook. (This is the picture you want to have on your paper. This picture could have something to do with you and your life right now.)
5. Go to the tools menu and choose the lasso (like a cattle roper).
6. Circle the picture you want by clicking the mouse button and holding it down as you draw around it. Be sure that the line circles the picture completely...it will "dance" when you have completed the circle around it.
7. Go to the edit menu again and choose Paste picture.
8. Close the scrapbook.
9. Quit Hypercard.
10. Open Microsoft Works and the word processor (or Word).
11. When you are looking at the page you will be writing on, go to the scrap book and find your picture.
12. Under the edit menu, choose copy.
13. Close the scrapbook.
14. Under the edit menu (again) choose paste and there you have it! You can change the size and location of the picture on the page. Then use the return key to place the cursor at the spot you want to begin typing your journal.
15. This journal entry can be about how it feels to use a computer, how it feels to be back in school or what is going on in your family. Who do you spend most of your time with? Who would you like to be spending more time with? Draw an image of who you are today using words and pictures.

Today I am ...

ASSIGNMENT 6



CREATE A BOOK FOR YOUR CHILD

Create a book to take home for your child. You may use a folk tale, fairy tale, make up a story, etc. DO NOT use a story that is copyrighted. You may also make a color, shape, picture, number, etc. book. There are ideas for ways to make books—pop up books, big books, felt or fabric book, etc. Look on the shelf in the adult room (parent resource room, public library) for ideas. You will have some class time to prepare this book. You have about three weeks.

BOOK DUE

ASSIGNMENT 7

SELF HELP TIPS
(Sent on-line from Indianapolis Public Even Start Family literacy Program)

Activity 1:
1. At the end of the week format two sheets of paper.
   a. On the first one list all of the things that bugged you this week.
   b. On the second page write down all the things that you can brag about this week. (Include writing this on a computer.)
      Print them both.
   c. On your way out the door, tear up your bug sheet and put it in the trash.
2. Take your brag sheet home and extra paper, if you need it.
3. Put your brag sheet on the refridgerator or place of prominence.
4. Repeat a, b, c with family members.
5. Ask family members to add their brags to the list.
6. If you have school-age children, or other adults in the home, you might ask them to share their bugs with you. This might help you to better understand their needs.

Have a good week-end! On Monday, brag about the good time you had doing this together.

To order the publication from the Salem Family Literacy Program, contact Virgina Tardaewether at Chemeketa Community College, 4000 Lancaster Dr. NE, Salem, Oregon 97305. Tel: (503) 399-4678; Fax: (503) 399-6979, or litlucy@aol.com

NCAL

Adult literacy software evaluation criteria

[Teachers who are not experienced with computers face a challenge when they have to order software for their students. A number of instruments have been developed to help evaluate software for literacy. They provide a framework reminding teachers of all the aspects they should consider. The one below, clear and comprehensive, was developed at the National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL) by Hopey, Rethemeyer and Songar. It is reprinted with permission It was shared in a workshop facilitated by Chris Hopey on August 4, 1995 at the Adult Literacy and Technology(ALT) conference, Philadelphia]

The following questions are designed to help the practitioner consider a variety of relevant issues in order to evaluate and make decisions about the best possible instructional software to use in particular educational situations. Each section features a different aspect of using software with the adult learner.

I. Learner/computer interaction

1. Exercises are appropriate?
2. Exercise frequency is adequate?
3. Directions and instructions are clear?
4. Type and place of requested response is clear?
5. Feedback after response is helpful?
6. Final evaluation of learner's performance is provided?
7. Software is easy to operate?

II. Learner control

1. Options, menus, and choices are available?
2. Display time is under learner's control?
3. Mouse exercise directions are adequate?
4. Movement within software is easy?
5. Obvious exits are available at all times?

III. Sequencing of instructional events

1. Goals and objectives are specified explicitly?
2. Instruction is organized from general to specific?
3. Adequate exercises and examples are provided to explain concepts?
4. Major concepts are easily identified through visual cues?
5. Different opportunities are provided for different ability levels?

IV. Screen design

1. Screen layout is pleasing?
2. Instructions are provided in areas separate from text?
3. Color is used effectively?
4. Exercises with the mouse require dexterity appropriate to student's ability?

V. Multimedia features

1. Digital audio is available?
2. Audio is used appropriately given the reading level of the student?
3. Appropriate graphics, photos, or video enhance the instruction?
4. Student progress is not slowed by unnecessary multimedia effects?
5. Student can choose to access audio and visuals on an as needed basis?

VI. Readability

1. Screens contain an amount of text appropriate to student's ability?
2. Content is relevant to adults?
3. Reading level is appropriate to learner's reading level?
4. Software teaches important reading comprehension skills?

VII. Administration

1. Accessing the course on the computer is easy?
2. Procedures for enrolling new students is clear and easy?
3. Student progress is easily tracked?

Reports & materials for the Adult Literacy and Technology Conference are available at The Centre For Literacy.

Resources are catalogued and may be borrowed in person or by mail (postage covered by the borrower). Documents should be requested by number. Documents can be consulted in The Centre from Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

In addition to the materials listed in the catalogue, we have directories of program and services, bibliographies on many subjects, international periodicals and newsletters, catalogues of learning materials, tapes/videos, and hanging files. We are connected to the National Adult Literacy Database and Internet. Printouts on specific subject headings can be requested at cost.

Information: Peg Killeen (514) 931-8731, local 1415; literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca.

•**180.031**
National Institutes of Health. *Clear & Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-Literate Readers*. National Institutes of Health.

•**510.001**
Philips, Maxine. *Getting Health Care*. New York: New Readers Press, 1980.

•510.002
Raines-Day, Nancy. *Help Yourself to Health*. Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press,1980.

•**510.004**
Ontario Public Health Association. *Partners in Practice: The Literacy and Health Project. Phase Two*. August 1990- October 1992. Toronto, ON: Ontario Ministry of Health, Secretary of State, National Literacy Secretariat, Health and Welfare Canada, 1993

•**510.006**
Read, Bob. *Health and Safety Workpack: For Training Courses Leading to the Basic Health and Safety Certificate*.Norwich, England: Norfolk County Council, 1994.

•**510.007**
Ontario Public Health Association. *Literacy and Health Project: Making the World Healthier and Safer for People Who Can't Read - Research Report*. Toronto, ON: Frontier College, Ontario Public Health Association, 1990.

•**510.009**
Nova Scotia Department of Education. *Healthy Families: Your Community Health Kit*. The Hants Shore Community Health Clinic, Nova Scotia: Department of Education, Literacy Section.

RESOURCES
Sample bibliography: Health and literature

Title: **Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine: A Shortened Screening Instrument**

Source: Family Medicine 25(6): 391-5 June 1993

Summary:
Due to increased awareness of the link between literacy and health, tests have been developed to assess the literacy level of patients in order to determine their needs in terms of health care information. An analysis of 'REALM,' a quick, efficient, and easy-to-administer literacy test is provided within this paper. 'REALM' was found to be a valid and reliable instrument with practical value as a rapid estimate of patient literacy and as an additional tool to address the health care needs of low-literacy patients.

Title: **Effects of Literacy on Health Care of the Aged: Implications for Health Professionals**

Source: Educational Gerontology v19, n4 p311-16, June 1993

Summary:
Levels of literacy have an impact on the quality of life of the elderly patient. Those elderly patients who cannot understand the health information provided have difficulty being active participants in their health care. This article explores the effects of low literacy on health as well as providing a multitude of programs suitable for elderly persons with low literacy.

Title: **Fotoplatica: An Innovative Teaching Method For Families With Low Literacy and High Stress**

Source: Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing 1993, vol. 10, no.3: 112-4

Summary:
An overview of Fotoplatica which is, in this case, pictorial posters used to explain procedures and pain experienced during cancer treatment. The target group for this experiment was illiterate Latino families whose children have cancer. The method was found to be extremely effective in creating a higher level of understanding and in decreasing anxiety.

Title: **The Determinants of Health from a Historical Perspective**

Source: Daedalus, Health and Wealth, Fall 1994, Vol.123, NO. 4

Summary:
This article offers a historical overview of factors relating to health and health care. Of most interest is the correlation between health status and economic status. For example, those of higher economic status and privilege in terms of perceived self control over destiny are consistently healthier than those of lower economic status. This fact has not altered over the last 1000 years.

Chronological Conference Listing

Local

PAPT-PACT Teachers Convention

November 16 - 17, 1995
Montreal, QC
Information: Donal Irving, 252-7946

National/International

Canadian Association for Comunity Living/Roeher Institute

"Beyond Words: The Power of Inclusion"
A Weekend Focusing on Literacy for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities
September 15 -17, 1995
Winnipeg, MN
Information: Tel: (204) 947-1118; Fax: (204) 949-1464.

1995 International Association for Continuing Education and Training

"Bridging the Centuries: Visions, Values, and Validations"
September 27 - 30, 1995
San Francisco, CA
Information: IACET, Tel: (202) 857-1122; Fax: (202) 223-4579.

An Evening with Len Masterman

OISE
October 5, 1995
Information: (416) 488-7280

The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada Tenth National Conference

"Bridges to a Brighter Future: Cooperate, Plan, Implement"
October 18 - 21, 1995
Saskatoon, SK
Information: Conference Office, Tel: (306) 652-4114; Fax: (306) 652-3220.

Learning Communities and Collaboration Delta College Regional Conference

October 19 - 21, 1995
Frankenmuth, MI
Information: Roz Weedman, Tel: (517) 686-9534.

Coalitions for Learning and Growth: An international celebration of language culture and communication

October 19 - 22, 1995
Toronto, ON
Information: Ian Waldron, Conference Co-chair, 1336 Pape Avenue, Toronto, ON, Canada, M4K 3X2, Fax: (416) 425-5873 or (519) 622-7008.

National Forum on Prior Learning Assessment

"Crediting the Past—Investing in the Fututre"
October 23 - 25, 1995
Ottawa, ON
Information: National Forum on PLA Secretariat, 350 Albert Street, 5th floor, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0S5, Tel: (613) 993-0615; Fax: (613) 991-3469; e-mail: cce@borg.ca

The Assocation for Business Communication 60th Annual Convention

November 1 - 4, 1995
Orlando, FL
Information: Sherry B. Scott, 747 Fieldstone Drive, NE, #304, Leesburg, VA 22075, Tel./fax: (703) 779-0844, E-mail: 71233.1664@compuserve.com

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)

"Fast Forward to the Future: Technology, Assessment and Professionalism"
November 1 - 4, 1995
Kansas City, MO
Information: AAACE, (202) 429-5131

Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking

Ethical Education: Learning Values, Teaching Practices
November 3 - 4, 1995
Annandale-on Hudson, NY
Information: Paul Connolly or Theresa Vilardi, Tel: (914) 758-7431,7432.

20th Annual Conference Association for Community Based Education

"Celebrating the Past and Building Communities for the Future"
November 16 - 18, 1995
Washington, D.C.
Information: ACBE, (202)462-6333

The Third Spilman Symposium on Issues in Teaching Writing

"Evaluating Student Writing: The Consequences of our Goals and Pedagogies"
November 18, 1995
Lexington, VA
Information: Robert L. McDonald, Department of English and Fine Arts, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, VA, Tel: (703) 464-7240, E-mail: mcdonaldrl%english%ovmi@ist.vmi.edu

MLA 1995

December 26 - 30, 1995
Chicago, Il
Guidelines: September 1994 issue of *PMLA* (pp 556-67)

CCCC Winter Workshop on Teaching Composition to Undergraduates

"Curricular Changes: Writing Across the Curriculum, Technology and Writing, Assessment and Writing"
January 3 - 6, 1996
Clearwater Beach, FL

International Reading Association
Adolescent/Adult Literacy: Making a Difference
February 2 - 4, 1996
Washington, D.C.
Information: Adolescent/Adult Literacy Program Committee, IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139, Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226; Fax: (302) 731-1057.

Technology and Learning
February 23 - 24, 1996
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Information: Lance Rivers, Department of English, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901.

World Conference on Literacy
"Improving Literacy, Changing Lives: Innovations and Interconnections for Development"
March 12 -15, 1996
Philadelphia, PA
Information: World Conference on Literacy , University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111, Tel: (215) 898-2100; Fax: (215) 898-9804.

College Composition and Communication (4Cs)
March 27 - 30, 1996
Milwaukee, WI

6th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women
April 22 -26, 1996
Adelaide Australia
Information: Festival City Conventions, P.O. Box 986, Kent Town, South Australia 5071, Tel: 61-8 363 1307; Fax: 61-8 363 1604

95/96 THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY & DAWSON COLLEGE WORKSHOPS SEMINARS

1 Literacy and action: Building community through writing groups

Leader: Hal Adams, University of Illinois at Chicago
Date: Friday, Oct. 27,1995
Time: 9:00 to 4:00 p.m

2 Media education isn't hard to teach

Leader: Chris Worsnop, Media educator
Date: Saturday, Nov. 4, 1995
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

3 Health and literacy: How do they connect? A panel

Panelists: **Deborah Gordon**, Canadian Public Health Association, Ottawa
Margaret LeBrun, The Golden Age Association
Linda Shohet, The Centre for Literacy
Date: Thursday, Nov. 9, 1995
Time: 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

4 Assessing adults and adolescents with study skills deficits:Two workshops

Leader: Uri Shafrir, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto
Dates: Thursday, Nov. 16, 1995
Friday, Nov. 17, 1995
Time: 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Homeless women, literacy and technology

Leader: Ludo Sheffer, University of Pennsylvania
Date: Monday, Jan. 22, 1996
Time: 6:00 - 9:30 p.m.

6 Verbal and visual literacy: Words and icons

Leader: Gunther Kress, University of London
Date: Thursday, Feb. 4, 1996
Time: 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

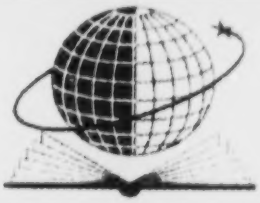
7 Women, literacy and social change

(in collaboration with Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW) celebrating International Women's Day)

Leaders: Jane Hugo, Laubach Literacy America
Peggy Maguire, Germantown Women's Educational Project
Date: Thursday, March 7, 1996
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

8 Relations between critical thinking and writing in all disciplines.

Leader: Lynn Quitman Troyka, City University of New York (CUNY)
Date: Friday, April 12, 1996
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



World Conference on Literacy: Call for Papers

"Improving Literacy, Changing Lives: Innovations and Interconnections for Development"sponsored by the International Literacy Institute (ILI), UNESCO, University of Pennsylvania, and other organizations
March 12 -15, 1996
Philadelphia, PA

The 1996 World Conference on Literacy will bring together experts in the field to address a host of issues related to the improvement of global literacy efforts amid dramatice political, economic, and cultural change, and to explore innovations and interconnections in literacy for development.

Topics will include professional development, planning and policy development, curriculum development, language and gender issues, family and intergenerational literacy, R&D networks, evaluation and assessment, cooperation and mobilization, distance eductaion, and technology.

Participants: Policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and other specialists in literacy and basic education.
Deadline: October 15, 1995
Information: World Conference on Literacy, International Literacy Institute, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111, Tel: (215) 898-2100, Fax: (215) 898-9804.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Peer tutoring in adult literacy education

A video and handbook are being produced by The Learning Centre of Edmonton, and they are looking for feedback from the field. There may be a distribution cost for the set.
Information: The Learning Centre, P.O. Box 1262, Edmonton, AB, Canada T5J 0M8, Fax: (403) 425-2205.

Workplace Literacy Report

"Workplace Basic Skills: A Study of 10 Canadian Programs" is a 1995 report funded by the National Literacy Secretariat which looks at different types of workplace literacy programs across Canada. Presented in case study format, the report describes how employers and employees have developed and sustained workplace training. In the analysis of the programs, the document highlights innovative program features, barriers encountered in the implementation stage and advice to others planning similar programs.
Copies can be obtained in English or French after October 1, 1995 by contacting the National Literacy Secretariat, 15 Eddy Street, RM 10 E 10, Hull, Quebec K1A 1K5, TEL: (819) 953-5280, FAX (819) 953- 8076.

Balancing Act

(March 1995) a report on how adult basic education programs are affecting the lives of 556 new ABE students in British Columbia, is the result of a 1993-94 thirteen-month pilot-study at three B.C. colleges, The Adult Basic Education (ABE) Student Outcomes Project.
Copies can be obtained from The Advanced Education Council, #950-409 Granville Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 1T2, Tel: (604) 895-5080, Fax: (604) 895- 5088.

Internet Directory of Literacy and Adult Education Resources

2nd edition, compiled and edited by Thomas W. Eland, June 1995.
Information: Minnesota Literacy resource Cnter, University of St. Thomas, Mail #5019, 2115 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105, Tel: (612) 962-5570, or e-mail: Tom Eland, tweland@stthomas.edu, or Ginny Heinrich, vmheinrich@stthomas.edu

CALL FOR AUTHORS

A New Workplace Literacy Reader

This fall work will begin on up-dating the 1991 "Basic Skills for the Workplace" book. Over the past five years a wealth of information has accumulated that can help advance the field of basic skills training. Drawing from this Canadian experience, the reader will be made up of approximately 20 chapters centred around the most important workplace learning themes and issues facing our practice.

An advisory committee will be meeting to select authors and chapter titles in late October 1995. If you would like to be considered for this manuscript project, please send a 150 - 200 word abstract outlining the general theme of the chapter and a title. Some writing experience would be helpful.

The abstract should be sent to Maurice Taylor, University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education, 145 Jean Jacques Lussier, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 (FAX 613-562-5146) before October 15, 1995.

NEW IN 1996

Feminist Landscapes: Essays on Gender and Technology in the Writing Classroom

– a collection of articles on topics related to women and technology to be published in 1996. Computer technologies are becoming more central and important to writing theory and instruction. Among the cited benefits to users are a democratizing potential, an increased awareness of multiple perspectives through networking, and an increased distribution of power and authority. But how do theories of gender and feminism complicate these issues of power, authority and voice? How do these potentials meet the material realities of women?
Information: Kristine Blair, Texas A & M, Corpus Christi, Division of Arts and Humanitites, 6300 Ocean Drive, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, kblair@falcon.tamucc.edu, fax: (512)994-5884 or Pamela Takayoshi, University of Louisville, Department of English, Louisville, KY 40292, pdtaka01@homer.louisville.edu

"Women's Studies and Information Technology: Reports from the Field,"

– a special issue of *Feminist Collections, A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources* will be published in Winter 1996
Information: Editors, *Feminist Collections*, 430 Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706, or e-mail: WISWSL@DOIT.WISC.EDU

CALL FOR PAPERS

International Award for Literacy Research

Co-sponsored by the UNESCO Institute for Education and Human Resources Development, Canada

Field of Research:
The possible field of research includes any of the following aspects: the problems of illiteracy; approaches to and methodologies of literacy; process and contents of training, post-literacy and adult education; analysis of policies and strategies; evaluation; school and illiteracy; economic or cultural dimensions of such provision.

Technical Requirements:
The manuscripts have to: be original and unpublished (copyright of the winning manuscript will pass to UIE); be written in English, French or Spanish; have a minimum of 100 pages and a maximum of 150 pages (between 30,000 and 50,000 words) excluding the annexes; be accompanied by a summary not exceeding 6 pages (1800 words) and a curriculum vitae.
The winning research will be announced in June 1996, and the author given US$ 10,000. The work will be published in English, French and Spanish.

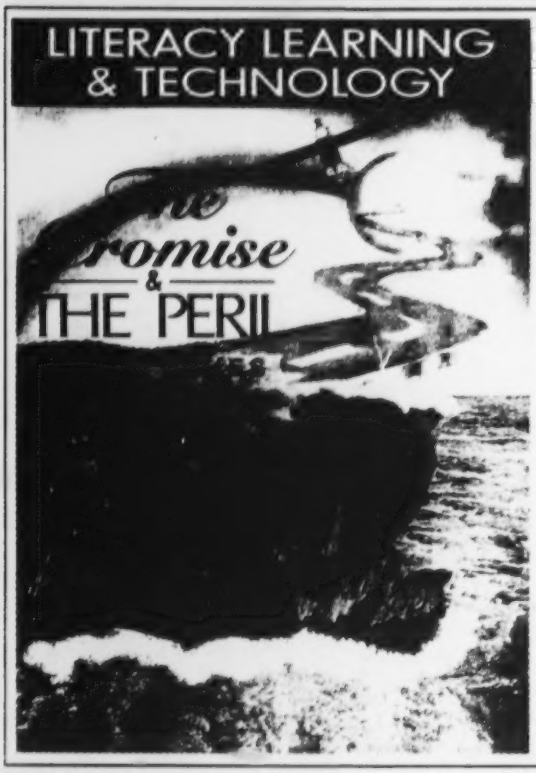
Deadline for submission: November 30, 1995

PUBLICATIONS

DRAWING: A link to Literacy

Stunning drawings and moving texts on social and personal issues that touch us all – war, race, love, AIDS, pollution – produced by college students.
To order a copy send a cheque for $10.00 plus $3.00 shipping & handling plus applicable sales tax(es) in Canada. Cheque is payable to The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, H3Z 1A4.

Information on special price for multiple copies: (514) 931-8731, local 1415.



Summer Institute 1995

An overview of the institute and short articles on various applications of technology in adult literacy focusing on the promise and the peril. Includes Ontario Literacy Communications Project, STAPLE, Georgia Tech Satellite Literacy Project, New Reading Disc and more.

Publication will be available in December 1995. Cost: $10 plus $3 postage and handling, includes GST. Make cheques payable to: The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, Canada, H3Z1A4.

Literacy & health: an annotated bibliography

This list of articles from the past five years contains access information and full summaries. Available for $5 to cover printing and mailing.

Make cheques payable to
The Centre for Literacy
3040 Sherbrooke Street West,
Montreal, QC, H3Z 1A4, Canada.

To subscribe, complete this form and mail it with your cheque to:

The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3Z 1A4

I enclose a cheque for ❑ $14 ❑ $75 ❑ $130 (Please mark choice)

Make cheque payable to The Centre for Literacy.
On multiple orders outside Montreal, please add $5.00 additional postage.

Name: _____

Institution: _____ Dept: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Single annual subscription	**$14**
Multiple annual subscription (10)	**$75**
Multiple subscription (20)	**$130**

Back issues available

For special prices on institutional subscriptions of 100 or more, call (514) 931-8731, ext. 1415

Literacy Across the Curriculum

is published four times during the academic year by The Centre for Literacy

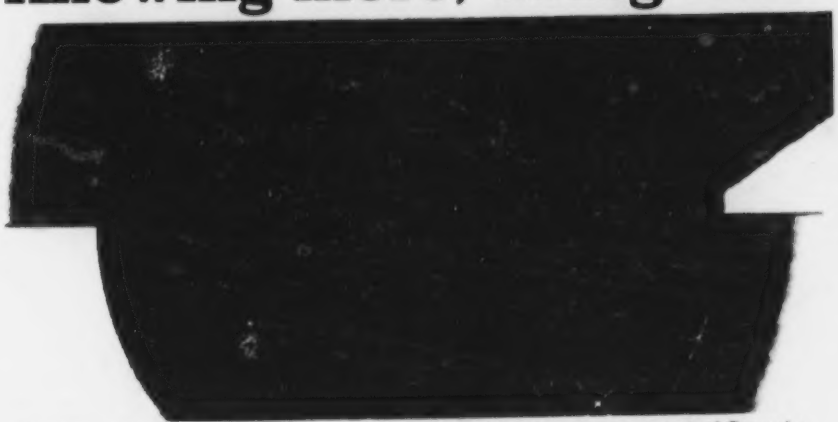
FALL 1995 Vol. 11 No. 3

Literacy across the curriculum

Including Media Focus

Connecting literacy in the schools, community and workplace

Knowing more, doing less



Graphic used in IALS documentation published by the government of Canada.

Last week, I was asked by the media to comment on the closing of three public libraries in Montreal.

This week, I was invited as a guest on a call-in talk show focused on the results of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS, see p.3) which compared the literacy skills among adults in 7 industrialized nations. Canada placed in the middle range. On that show, the host read a press clipping about 250 provincial literacy programs brought to the verge of closing because their grant payments have been delayed.

As my last task of the week, I was also asked to participate in a preliminary consultation on the uses of research in literacy in Canada.

Now I have to ask: Where are the links between what we know and what we do?

Research and policy

One of the rationales for conducting research is that it can help policy-makers make more informed decisions. You would have to look hard in Canada to find any recent examples of public policy based on research. Our decisions have been driven by politics and panic.

Hysteria over debt and deficit underlay the most massive cuts to social and health programs this country has ever witnessed at national, provincial and local levels. Long-term impact is ignored, and the implications camouflaged in double-speak, a variety of literacy issues quite apart from the ones addressed by the international study. Orwell named this abuse of language fifty years ago.

Libraries and the future

Let me focus on the closing of libraries. Ontario targeted some libraries in the latest budget, but the libraries in Montreal are closer to home.

Quebec has had one of the most poorly supported library systems

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE

3 International Adult Literacy Survey – IALS
4 To ponder
5 Learning disabilities: adults
7 In the classroom
-Inquiry projects
-Participatory action research
11 Technology & literacy
13 Reviews
15 Resources: Libraries
16 Conferences
18 Announcements

The Centre for Literacy Montreal, Quebec

Literacy across the curriculum

The Centre for Literacy
3040 Sherbrooke Street West,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada,
H3Z 1A4

Editor: Linda Shohet
Layout & design: Ponctuation GRAFIX
(514) 733-5924

Dépot légal – 1991

ISSN 1192-3288
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

The Centre for Literacy/Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.

Literacy for the 21st century
Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in the industrialized world, dating from the years when the church enforced the Vatican Index. In a 1989 survey of provincial and state libraries in Canada and the US, Quebec tied for bottom place with Mississippi which has since injected massive funds into upgrading.

The three libraries closed in Montreal sit in the poorest districts of the city where school drop-out rates are highest and low literacy levels prevail. Only weeks before, a well-to-do municipality unveiled its new multi-million dollar library renovated with funds raised by the community.

IALS points out that those industrialized countries with the highest levels of literacy have the most strongly supported system of public libraries and adult learning opportunities. They do not mention that libraries today have become more than repositories of books, that librarians are now information managers, and that increasingly libraries house freenets providing access to information for those who cannot afford it on their own. Libraries are symbols of the value a society places on reading and learning.

Research has told us that literacy is dependent on practice —in families, in the community, in the workplace— and that it is closely related to issues of poverty and health, to name but some of the complex connections. It has told us that those with low levels of literacy are more likely to be unemployed, have some learning difficulties, and be in poorer health than others.

Policy today is cutting support to women, is cutting staff in hospitals and schools, is eliminating support services for those with special needs.

What do we really need to know?

If we are going to undertake more research, we should start by investigating the gaps between our findings and our services. How many adult literacy/basic skill seats exist in each province today compared to five years ago? How many library and library literacy programs? How many assessment centres where adults with needs can be evaluated and directed for help? The list is long.

IALS talks about literacy policy having to be multi-faceted and long-term. Where is long-term integrated policy being considered or undertaken in Canada?

A culture of innovation

In a recent book on the future of English as a profession in the UK, University of London professor Gunther Kress talks about the need for providing more than critique in times of intense social change. He talks about having to nurture a "culture of innovation" and of the role to be played by English teachers in that endeavour:

> Innovation is something you work for; it cannot be wished, and it cannot be legislated. Nor can it happen in one area alone: it has to be an activity worked for across all cultural, economic, technological, political and social domains. You can't pursue a scorched-earth policy in relation to the Arts and the Humanities, and hope for real innovation in technology. Humans, alas and thankfully, and human societies, work in much more subtle and complex ways than that.
>
> It is that realization which puts English at the very

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

International comparison of adult literacy released

INTERNATIONAL ADULT LITERACY SURVEY
IALS

[The following report is based on information circulated by the National Literacy Secretariat and StatsCan. It is not a comment prepared by *LAC*.]

The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) has studied and compared adult literacy skills in seven industrialized countries — Canada, Germany, The Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the US; its main report entitled *Literacy, Economy and Society* has been released in early December, with more detailed country-specific reports expected in March 1996. Canada played a major role in designing and carrying out the survey, using the expertise at StatsCan developed in doing the 1989 survey of literacy skills used in daily activities (LSUDA).

IALS set out to permit valid comparisons of the literacy skills of adults of all ability levels in participating countries; to test the inherent stability of the basic skills used in literacy across diverse languages and cultures; and to advance the concept of literacy as a continuum of skills, at least some of which are possessed by all adults to some degree. The "Backgrounder" on IALS compares it to "a distance scale used to map a journey, along which successive skill levels range from quite limited to very high."

This study moves away from a conception of literacy as a condition that people either do or do not have. It provides a profile of adult literacy based on respondents' performance on a set of tasks that reflect the types of materials and demands they encounter in their daily lives. IALS identifies three domains of literacy: prose, document and quantitative literacy. The results are reported in five levels as compared to 4 in LSUDA.

Among the areas examined are the relationship between literacy and employment status, occupation, income, immigration, gender, age, education attainment, and social participation.

Reflection on literacy practices

The new study data suggests that adult literacy skills result from the basic skills acquired at school and thereafter become highly dependent on life practices. Individual responsibility for ensuring that life-long supportive literacy practices are developed and maintained appears to be essential. The middle class has in the past often used education credentials as evidence of their skills. IALS suggests that schooling and education systems only provide a basic platform for literacy skill development; much of its further development depends on reinforcing life practices.

According to preliminary results, Canada performs credibly compared to other participating countries, but despite the generally positive results, substantial numbers of people in Canada are performing at the lowest IALS levels. The percentage of Canadians falling into Levels 1 and 2 (which correspond to Levels 1, 2, and 3 on LSUDA) is 42 compared to 38%.

Endnote: In the next issue of *LAC*, look for a detailed comment and analysis of IALS.

Information: NLS,
Tel: (819) 953-5675;
Fax: (819) 953-8076;
World Wide Web: www.statcan.ca ("What's New" category)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

centre, absolutely of any attempt at remaking present paths in the future. For me, two major considerations stand out: English is a vastly complex subject, more than any other in the school system. It is, above all, the subject which deals with the means of representation and communication; the means whereby we say who we are, to ourselves and others; the means whereby we can examine the visions others before us have had about themselves and their times; and the means of giving voice to our visions, for ourselves and for others; the proposal of alternatives for debate, and after that debate, for common action. (Kress, *Writing the Future. English and the making of a culture of innovation*. London, 1995).

If we consider where this vision links with literacy, it gives us a powerful place from which to lobby for policy that respects research.

This issue of *LAC* looks at some literacy practices, programs and materials that nourish a culture of innovation against all the odds. (LS)

1 On saving tribal words

These little books are ideal for my vocabularies. There are still hundreds and hundreds of words that I have to write down because if I don't do it they will be gone for ever. I hate to think of words being lost like that, cut away from the things they are tied to, evaporating into silence. I hate to think that no one will know that this red sand has been called *munda*, while the moon slipping and sliding through the night sky above my tent is *beera*. The words can be as beautiful as a lullaby, even if you don't know their meaning or have forgotten which tribal group they come from.

Julia Blackburn, *Daisy Bates in the Desert, A Woman's Life among the Aborigines*, (New York:Vintage Books)1995, p.155.

2 On personal family literacy

As literacy educators we must resist abstractions and generalizations. Our focus should be upon the particularities that help shape the individual literacies of our students and ourselves. I suggest that we begin to look closely at what we and our students do daily with print: What do we read and write? How do we do these things? With whom? For what purposes? How are different literacy acts influenced and shaped by particular relationships, personal histories, and unique interests, desires, and needs? These are the kinds of questions that can help us shape viable literacy programs. Statistical generalizations, grade level scores, commercial placement tests, and canned curricula never will help us shape viable literacy programs. Statistical generalizations, grade level scores, commercial placement tests, and canned curricula never will help us address these very human issues and concerns.

The recent emphasis on family literacy programs makes the complexity I've been describing and the potential benefits of such efforts even more relevant. At the same time, however, these programs are susceptible to the dangers of generalization as Elsa Roberts Auerbach and others have discussed. Do family literacy programs acknowledge and build upon the intricate and ever-shifting relationships that exist in all families and of which my own family is simply one example? Do we see the literate person and thus literacy education as being enmeshed in complex webs of relationships and interdependencies? Or do we see individuals in terms of abstract categories, for example, "illiterate single parent on welfare who needs job training," to whom and for whom we must do something?

I began this essay with my family because literacy I believe involves things like connection, sharing, individual interest and need, mutual purpose and vision, and, yes, love. As the French priest, novelist, and essayist Jean Sulivan once observed, "Reading is completely pointless if it doesn't teach us to understand life, especially the burning passion of life itself." Our efforts as educators will be more potentially useful if we begin to look seriously at the relationships among literacy, family, passion, and love instead of the relationship between literacy and some abstract scheme of categorization. The one way subtilizes our vision and particularizes our practice while the other way leads us into the vague and shadowy landscape of generalizations.

Francis E. Kazemek, "Commentary: Family literacy — Reading and writing in Rhinelander," *Journal of Reading*, 38:8 (May,1995) 602-603.

"What happens to kids with learning disabilities when they grow up?" – *Uri Shafrir*

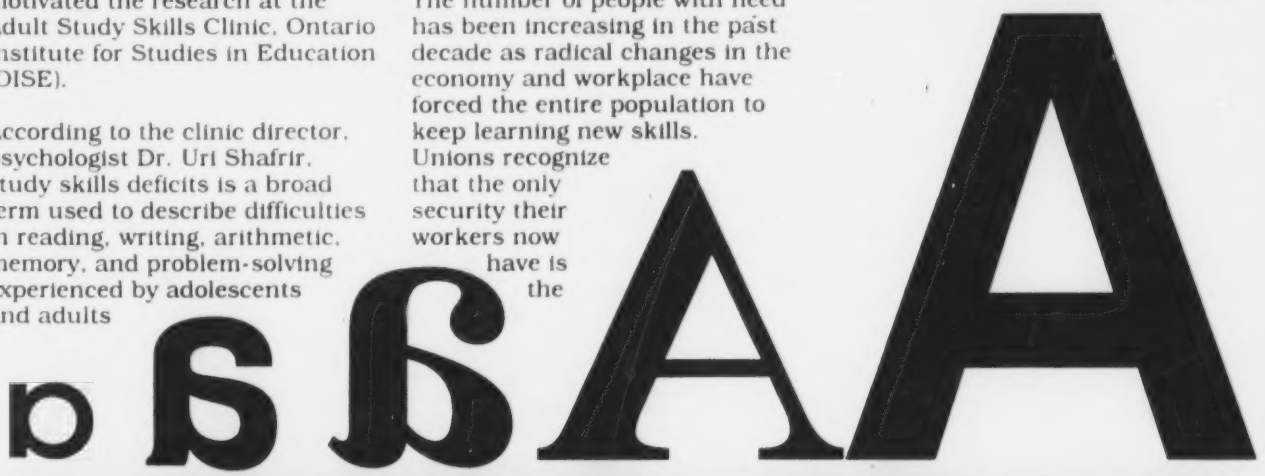
What does happen to kids with learning disabilities when they grow up? That question has motivated the research at the Adult Study Skills Clinic, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

According to the clinic director, psychologist Dr. Uri Shafrir, study skills deficits is a broad term used to describe difficulties in reading, writing, arithmetic, memory, and problem-solving experienced by adolescents and adults with a range of learning disabilities and skills gaps.

The number of people with need has been increasing in the past decade as radical changes in the economy and workplace have forced the entire population to keep learning new skills. Unions recognize that the only security their workers now have is the ability to adapt quickly. This has been the other motivation for Shafrir.

Shafrir and his colleagues have researched and developed experimental strategies to help this population improve their performance in the area of weakness. While he

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



SKILLS

A skill is the ability to perform a task - to successfully execute a certain procedure (e.g., to cook; to walk; to drive a car). Skills can be classified within categories (e.g., mechanical skills) by the level of the skill. Thus a **low-level skill** is a skill that is well defined and applies to a simple task (e.g., tightening a bolt). A **high-level skill** is a skill that applies to a complex task (e.g., overhauling an engine), and is composed of many low-level skills.

Skills may be classified by level of specificity:
- **specific skill**: the ability to fulfil a task in a specific domain
- **generic skill** : a skill that can be applied across domains

Generic skills can be classified into different categories:
- **receptive communication** - listening, reading
- **expressive communication** - speaking, writing
- **quantitative skills** - arithmetic
- **visual skills** - space relations
- **self-management** - problem-solving, metacognitive control of learning outcomes, memory, time management, organizational skills
- **affective functioning** - self-efficacy, affective norms of relationships and values

What does it take to learn new skills?

- **Cognitive readiness:** a good level of competence in generic skills; possessing the "cognitive prerequisites" for effective learning
- **Affective readiness:** being motivationally and emotionally committed to the idea of "life-long learning"

The acquisition of generic study skills by adults is quite a different process from the acquisition by children, not only because adults learn differently than children, but also because **the reasons that prevented a certain adult from becoming a good reader or writer early in life most likely had other repercussions** on that individual's mental life, including family relations, work history, and general well being.

A good assessment and remediation methodology aimed at improving adult generic study skills must be informed and guided by these considerations.

excerpts adapted from handouts – U. Shafrir

"Competence is not a fixed property that one does or does not have in one's behavioral repertoire. Rather, it involves a generative capability in which cognitive, social, and behavioral skills must be organized and effectively orchestrated to serve innumerable purposes. There is a marked difference between possessing knowledge and skills and being able to use them well under diverse circumstances, many of which contain ambiguous, unpredictable, and stressful elements... A capability is only as good as its execution"

Bandura, A. (1990). Conclusion: Reflections on nonability determinants of competence. In R.J. Sternberg and J. Kolligian, Jr. (Eds.), *Competence Considered*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

acknowledges that the assessment instruments are still being tested and improved, he explains that the approach at OISE is a departure from traditional methods of assessment and intervention. He believes that the model offers adults the possiblity of regaining damaged self-esteem as a prerequisite to correcting poor perfomance.

The innovative piece of the study skills assessment is the emphasis it places on the affective. Previous work tended to filter out aspects of emotion that could not be easily measured. But Shafrir insists that it is almost impossible to find an adult who has grown up with a learning disability without suffering some emotional damage, and he believes that this must be addressed.

Uri Shafrir can be contacted at the Adult Study Skills Clinic, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON, M5S 1V6, Tel (416)923-6641; Fax: (416) 926-4725.

TWO MODELS FOR ASSESSING SKILL DEFICITS

(from the perspective of the assessor)

MODEL	DEFICIT MODEL	REMEDIATION
Motivation (of assessor)	research	help the learner
Means	normed tests	experimental procedures specifically designed for adults
Results	"clean" diagnosis	clues for remediation
Status	well-established	new and developing

Failure and Learning

The learning process, particularly inferential learning, is intimately tied up with failure because learning by inference means paying attention to the outcomes of past episodes in the learning sequence.

Since those outcomes could be positive or negative, paying close attention to feedback plays an important role in inferential learning.

A typical episode in an inference sequence

The learner is presented with a situation (e.g., a question) and has to respond. Following the response, the learner receives right/wrong feedback. If the feedback is **positive** (e.g. "the answer is correct"), there is little to think about and most learners will "**simply keep going**."

However, if the feedback is **negative** (e.g., "the answer is wrong"), the learner has a reason to pause and - perhaps - **reconsider his/her internal procedures that led to the erroneous response.**

Good learners do that; these are the **post-failure reflective learners** who typically pay close attention to their mistakes. But poor learners tend to be **post-failure impulsive:** after receiving a negative feedback they will "simply keep going", as if everything is OK.

excerpts adapted from handouts – U. Shafrir

This edition of In the Classroom features approaches that involve students in inquiry and analysis of social realities in their own lives. Inquiry maps have students doing research using all the traditional means plus new technologies. Participatory Action Research (PAR) takes students beyond research to defining the actions required to change conditions.

Inquiry projects/inquiry maps

By David Rosen

*[This idea, reprinted with permission, was published in **All Write News**, October 1995, at the Adult Literacy Resource Institute in Boston. Designed for an adult literacy/basic skills program, it can be adapted to different learning environments and levels. It can also be revised for use in a classroom that does not have connections to the Internet or the World Wide Web. Some of the references have been changed for local context. ed]*

An inquiry project begins with a question or problem, ideally one which has emerged from a student, and which other students feel is interesting, important to them, and worth answering or solving. It ends not in a product, but in some answers, some points of view and more questions. These can be documented and published in print, or electronically, on-line.

For example, one day a student brings her pay stub to get help interpreting it. She tells her teacher that she's willing to have it used as an example if her name is blocked out. The teacher puts it on the overhead projector. The pay stub has deductions taken out for health benefits, pension and something else which isn't clear to anyone. It refers to "gross" and "net" pay.

It generates a lot of questions:

1. "What is the difference between "gross" and "net" pay?"

2. "Why is so much taken out for health benefits?" (Someone adds, " and the employer has to pay for health benefits, too.")

3. "What is QPP/CPP?" (When this is explained, someone asks, "Will this be enough money for retirement?")

4. Someone asks, apparently veering off into a new subject, "How do they decide how much to pay you?"

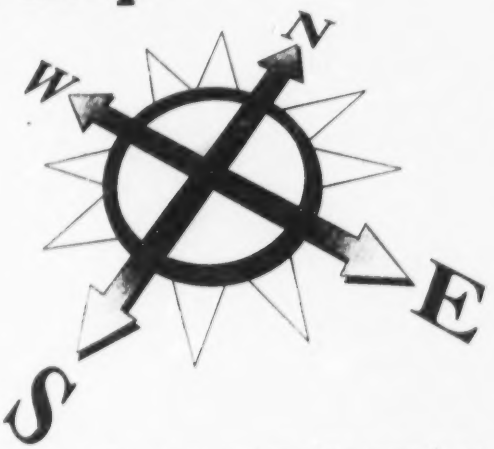
5. Someone else adds, "Yeah, and who decides?"

6. And someone else, "And how can I get them to pay me more?"

Everyone laughs at that one, but the teacher takes these questions seriously. The next day she brings the questions back to the class, in writing. They read them over, discuss them again; and other, related questions emerge. She says they can get the answers to these questions, but first they have to decide which ones seem to be most important to the class.

The class decides on:
1) "Who decides how much to pay me, how do they decide, and how can I get paid more?" and

2) "Exactly what are they taking out of my paycheck and what does it go for?"



Everyone in the class is working, or has recently worked, and is very interested in these questions. Together they discuss how to get answers, how to research these questions themselves. Since the questions are very particular to each student's situation, they decide that each person has to investigate his or her own case. But they also decide to share the results of their information to see if there are any patterns in what they find.

Carrying out the inquiry

Together, they discuss who might have the answers to question #1: Shop steward/union rep, supervisor, personnel department, co-workers are all possibilities. Together they generate a list of questions to start from, a kind of interview format. Then, over two weeks, they carry out the interviews.

In class, the interview questions are written on an overhead and the students tell what answers

NAME OF EMPLOYEE	EMPLOYEE NUMBER	EMPLOYEE'S OCCUPATION
Joan B. Good	02341	Line worker

PERIOD BEGINING YR	MTH	DAY	PERIOD ENDING YR	MTH	DAY		HOURS	RATE	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHERS	AMOUNT	GROSS PAY
95	12	11	95	12	25	R	38	10.62	403.38			403.38	403.38
						O T							

1. FEDERAL INCOME TAX	2. PROVINCIAL INCOME TAX	3. U.I.C.	4. Q.P.P.	5. GROUP INS.	6. C.P.P.	7.	8.	9.	TOTAL DEDUCTIONS
50.15	70.10	13.50	12.13	5.00	10.65				163.38

December 23 19 95	NET PAY 240.00

An example of a salary deduction slip

they received. The results are printed, photo-copied and given to the students to think about, to see if they can find patterns.

In the next class, they discuss patterns: Almost everyone has an annual "performance review" at work done by a supervisor or manager. Many students found out about "cost of living" increases. Some students found out they had more benefits than they knew about, and that the company considered benefits an important part of the whole pay package (salary, wages and benefits). One student learned that although the amount taken out for pension differed from student to student, the percentage was always the same. (The teacher noted this for next week's math lesson on percentages.)

Mapping the outcomes

What one student said he has found out, another student or the teacher is not sure is correct. The teacher puts a question mark next to it, indicating that it needs further research, verification. The teacher (or a small group of students where possible) types up the questions, sub-questions, and the answers the students found, puts them in hypertext language (html) and adds this text to the literacy program's inquiry maps on "Employability" on the program's web page on the World Wide Web.

The web page already has such questions (and some answers) relating to: how to know what education/training is required for a job, how to find a job, how to change jobs. Some of the questions and answers branch to other questions and other answers on other inquiry maps on other web pages.

These inquiry maps are usually incomplete, with some questions left for others to pursue. There are enough questions and answers to make them interesting, but many are left unanswered to stimulate further questions, further research.

Sometimes a question leads to one answer. In some cases a question leads not to an answer, but to a debate— a transcript of a forum where students, from around the world, have wrestled with the question and come up with different answers, different points of view. One inquiry map leads to others. The questions above lead to a question about health benefits. This leads to a question about health conditions at work. This leads to a question about indoor air quality and how it is measured and so on...

David Rosen is the director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute at Roxbury Community College in Boston, MA. He has been active in adult literacy and technology work for several years.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Participatory Action Research

By the PAR Research Group, Brandon, MN

[This piece, reprinted with permission, is an excerpt from Where There is Life, there is Hope (See Reviews for ordering instructions), a description of and guide to a participatory action research project carried out with a group of women literacy students in Brandon, Manitoba. In this segment, the students relate how they conducted an analysis of discrimination, the issue they had identified for the project. It is an example of another way of using drawing for learning, a continuing interest of **LAC.** ed.]

Analyzing Discrimination

After writing our own stories of how we experienced discrimination in our lives, we decided we should do something about the underlying causes of discrimination: why discrimination exists in the first place, who it hurts, and who benefits from it. We asked Janet Smith and Jennifer Howard [the facilitators] to help us analyze* the issue of discrimination, using a drawing technique called Ah-Hah!.* This is what happened in the Ah-Hah workshop.

We started by going around the circle, introducing ourselves to Jennifer (some of us had never met her before) and telling each other how we were feeling that morning. The Opening Circle is something we did each time we met. Usually we passed around an object like a pen or a stone or feather and gave each person a chance to speak. It helped to start the day and got us focused on the tasks ahead.

Individual experiences

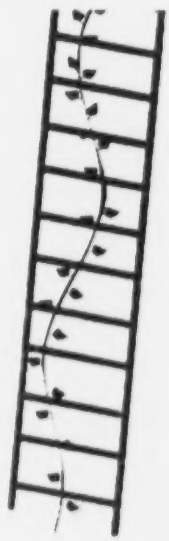
Next, Janet asked us each to draw a picture of ourselves, including our experiences with work, family, church, volunteering, neighborhood, school, housing, social services or anything else that affects our daily lives. We each took crayons and a piece of paper and headed for a comfortable space in the room to think and draw. When we had all finished, we shared our drawings with the group and posted them on the wall.

Group experiences

We then looked at the individual drawings and tried to see what we had in common as a group. Jennifer drew our ideas on a large sheet of paper on the wall as we called them out. We all agreed that family was in the centre of our lives, so we put a symbol for the family in the centre of the page. We are also all women and are attending a literacy program. We all work - some of us earn an income and some of us don't. We all enjoy recreational activities. We all feel pulled in many different directions at times and find it hard to maintain a balance in life. Each of these ideas was drawn into the centre of the picture.

After seeing ourselves as a group of women literacy students, Janet asked us to think about what *barriers** we face as a group and what some of our *goals* are. We drew both a wall and a ladder to symbolize that some barriers are harder to get over than others.

The ladder also became a symbol we used for our book's cover:



Barriers

The main barriers we face are: money, the "system", having few choices, being weighed down by too many responsibilities, our past, other people's negative attitudes, mixed messages from people, and the legal system.

Goals

Our main goals are: getting a job, studying and learning, having positive relationships with people, and feeling better about ourselves.

Underlying Causes

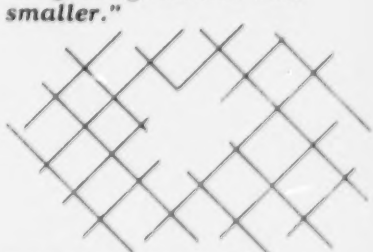
We then looked at the underlying causes of discrimination. While discrimination often shows itself through people's attitudes and actions towards us, these attitudes and actions are actually symptoms* of a bigger issue:*power*. We drew pictures of some of the institutions* that have power in our society including the government, big business, the media*, professionals, schools, and the church. Power can be either positive or negative. We felt that when power is combined with control it becomes a negative force. We each had experiences when one or more of these institutions were a controlling factor in our lives.

Linkages

Next we drew *lines* between these institutions symbolizing how they are *linked*. For example, we recognized that big business owns most of our major media sources and gives money to political parties as well. We talked about how this can affect the messages we get from the media.

Ways in which these structures are connected to our experiences as women were shown by connecting *lines* between our *lives* and the *structures of power and control*. Some of the barriers we face in terms of getting into education programs, social programs and jobs for example, are directly related to government cut-backs. We showed this as a net with a hole in it, and the net getting smaller and smaller. As women, we often count on the social safety net to help us with things like child care, job access programs, social security, and unemployment insurance. We feel that these policies of cut-backs discriminate against us as women and as literacy students.

"We showed this as a net with a hole in it, and the net getting smaller and smaller."



Action for Change

Finally, we looked at ways of changing the present situation of discrimination that we, as women literacy students, experience. We drew pictures of people getting angry and talking with others about how discrimination affects them. We drew pictures of people working together to learn more about their rights and how to organize for action. We also drew a clock, indicating that the process of change takes time. In the end we want people to respect and listen to one another. One of us finished the workshop with a message of: *"I'm worth more than this!"*

"We also drew a clock, indicating that the process of change takes time."

* Words with asterisks were defined in a glossary. "Ah-HaH! is explained as "an exclamation of surprise, triumph or sudden understanding."

VOL 5 No. 3 FALL 1995

Media Focus

THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY

OTHER PERSPECTIVES

In this section, new to *Media Focus*, we will periodically ask media educators from other places to share their perspectives on media education.

Making Peace with the Media

by Pat Kipping

After years of trying to get educators, parents, politicians and activists to take mass media seriously as an important influence on thinking, learning, citizenship, work and relationships, I think media literacy advocates can safely say we are finally getting somewhere. Every province in Canada is strengthening its commitment to critical thinking and media literacy in its education objectives. In October of this year, the Minister of Education and Culture for Nova Scotia said, "The basics now include watching, listening and thinking." Even the cable television industry supports media literacy, although I am not sure they mean the same thing as I do.

Everybody these days, from the CRTC to the local home and school association, seems to be taking the media seriously, discussing the problems and posing solutions. I should be delighted. Instead, I frequently find myself in the unfamiliar and uncomfortable position of trying to mollify some of the more adamant media bashers to the point of feeling as if I am defending the media.

I am uncomfortable defending the media because there is a lot about them that I do not like — the unrelenting commercialism, the dominance of American culture, the concentration of ownership by large corporations with ugly ties to the military-industrial complex and the destruction of their world cultures and environments, the lack of cultural diversity, the violence, the racism, the sexism, etc.

However, I am also uncomfortable with generalized media-bashing because for 20 years I have made my living from either making, researching or administering media. So, I feel that I am part of the so-called "problem." I also realize that after 40 years of criticism – much of it legitimate – the impact and pervasiveness of the mass media have not changed for the better. An old yoga teacher said, "What you resist will persist."

Making peace with the media: Step 1

So I have tried to make peace with the media in a discourse that is beyond blaming, outside guilt and that still leaves room for clear recognition of problems and creative solutions. This process has become the basis for the media literacy work I do with adult learners, parents and educators.

The first step is to accept that we are in a "relationship" with the media. To understand the quality of that relationship is an important component of critical media awareness. The ability to build autonomous, active relationships is considered a sign of wisdom and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

This quote from early television research has been useful as I try to make peace with the media.

"For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For some children, under the same conditions, or for the same children under different conditions, it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions, most television is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial."

Schramm and Parker, *Television and the Lives of Our Children*, 1961.

IN THIS ISSUE

3 **Media Education in English Quebec**

4 **Highlights from The National Media Literacy Conference**

8 **Reviews**

8 **News & notes**

Medi FOCUS

is a supplement to **Literacy Across the Curriculum** published four times a year by

The Centre for Literacy, Inc
3040 Sherbrooke St. West
Montreal, Quebec
Canada H3Z 1A4
Tel: (514) 931-8731 Ext. 1415

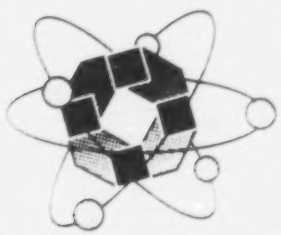
Editor
Linda Shohet

Supplement editor
Judy Brandeis

Layout & design
Pon©tu@t!on GRAFIX
(514) 733-5924

The Centre for Literacy - Le centre d'alphabetisation

is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.



Literacy for the 21st century

Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text. In addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given lifelong learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing of print, understanding and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

maturity in this society. Therefore a basic goal of media literacy education is to encourage the development of autonomous, active relationships with media to allow learners to use all media to their own advantage and fulfillment rather than be used to benefit someone else's commercial or political agenda.

Becoming aware of the quality of a relationship, defining it and deciding whether or not to restructure it, are potent learning experiences. Some might call them transformative. They involve basic critical thinking processes such as careful observation, questioning assumptions, analysing context, exploring alternatives and integrating changes. They engage key media literacy concepts — the viewer's role in negotiating meaning, issues of content, ownership and representation.

Making peace: Step 2

The second component of making peace with the media is to embrace a statement by art educator Michael Emme who said, "The media are not a problem to be solved but an environment to be navigated."

Most people who are involved with adult education, literacy and media literacy work, including myself, are critical thinkers with well-developed social analyses. We have detected and identified problems and are determined to find solutions, even if the solution only means defining the problem more accurately. For the most part, we consider ourselves agents of social and cultural change. We see problems and we fix them, using education as our tool. But to deal with the media we need to move

beyond the "fix it" approaches we use for other problems. Repeat after me: the media are not a problem. We canno t fix them. The media are environments. We must learn to navigate. This is a difficult shift to make.

Marshall McLuhan prodded us toward the shift in his 1961 book, *The Medium is the Message*, when he wrote, "Any understanding of social and cultural change is impossible without a knowledge of the way the media work as environments."

Creating a knowledge of how media work as environments and learning how to navigate is the real work of media literacy education. There is room for everyone in this work. We are all in this mass together, and there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for developing media literacy.

Navigating strategies

Although the "inoculation" or "protection" approach is felt by most media literacy educators to be outdated and ineffective, we need to realize that in some cases "inoculation" might be appropriate. For example, the mother of a young African Nova Scotian boy is wise to tell her young son, "You are not going to see yourself reflected on TV. If you do, it will be as a gangster, pimp, drug addict or fool and they won't be Canadian with 250 years of history either. Just know that is not you and you don't have to act like it or believe it."

I use a similar line with my 13-year-old daughter about music videos and fashion tv. "Protectionist" maybe, but no more so than telling her to wear a life jacket when navigating Atlantic coastal waters. And it does not mean I have to discourage her from appreciating her own budding beauty or learning how to recognize the way strong women are portrayed in media.

Media literacy advocates who don't support the view that violent television causes violent behaviour find themselves in a tough place. Does that mean they have to say that tv violence is benign? I do not think so. Many children will not suffer negative effects of tv violence because they have financial, family and community resources that provide alternative activities and keep tv violence in perspective. But children who experience abuse or violence in their own lives are at great risk of being further damaged by the violence they see on tv.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Media education in English Quebec: An overview

The following article is adapted from the original which appeared in ***Communication—Information, Médias, Théories Pratiques Vol. 16 No. 1*** *It is reprinted with permission.*

The short history of English media education in Quebec has been marked by both frustration and progress. Universal problems such as budget cutbacks, resistance to change, an undercurrent of distrust of the media and fear of technology are not uncommon.

Despite these realities, however, a number of developments and spreading enthusiasm place Quebec in the vanguard of media education.

Officially, in the English sector, the Ministry of Education of Quebec (MEQ) addressed concepts of media education as early as 1980 in four Communication Arts Guidebooks. These, however, were largely unused: in fact, few teachers even knew of their existence. In 1991, the MEQ established a media education committee with a mandate to revise or rewrite the original Communication Arts Guides. This initiative situated media education in the Secondary English Language Arts Curriculum, although it is optional as a context for study. The revised program, entitled *Media Files*, offers modules with activities combining production and analysis in Print, Radio, TV and Film and Popular Culture. [See REVIEW, p.8.]

Beyond educational institutions

In Quebec, as in other parts of the world, teachers have taken individual initiative for in-service training by seeking out information and attending conferences and workshops. Awareness of the importance of media education has evolved from independent groups within the educational community.

The Association for Media Education in Quebec (AMEQ) was formed in 1989 with the goal of addressing media education at all levels from elementary through university.

The International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (CIFEJ), founded in 1955 under the auspices of UNESCO, moved its head office to Montreal in 1992 and has contributed to the energy being generated for media education. CIFEJ projects and objectives are directed towards research and development in the field of film and television related to children and youth. Their workshops demystify the medium and build the confidence young people need to test the limits of their own creativity.

Many initiatives have been undertaken by The Centre for Literacy, a resource centre and teacher-training project which provides services that support and promote the advancement of literacy in the schools, workplace and community. In 1989, responding to a growing demand, The Centre began to expand its

---

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Other debates

There is a longstanding split between those who think media education should focus on the development of production skills and those who favour analysis. Further splits emerge between those who believe that we must teach about media rather than teach through the media. Education for literacy must use whatever approach works.

There are increasing numbers of learners who cannot engage with standard printed texts either for reading or writing, viewing or production ends. Many media literacy advocates, media educators, artists and media artists concern themselves with this group. They encourage children to engage with media by developing viewing skills and media/art-making. These approaches can be used to lead some children into a more successful relationship with "conventional literacy" activities. Media-making approaches can also provide them with another, perhaps more successful means of expression and participation in life.

The debate over last spring's TV Turn-off week in the U.S. poses another opportunity to apply the metaphor of navigating and environment. Many media literacy advocates eschew tv-turn-off events as undermining media literacy efforts. Most of us live in busy, noisy, dirty city environments but sometimes we need to breathe clean air and smell wood smoke instead of factory smoke. My family doesn't stop learning when we go on country outings or take tv retreats. We just learn differently.

I am convinced that the only way to create a healthy environment for all learners is to fully engage with the (media) environment. That means drawing on the full gamut of strategies — protecting them from dangerous insects, lobbying against industrial polluters, recognizing individual allergies, teaching the names of the trees, learning how to sort the weeds from the vegetables and creating the ability to rejoice in the glory of the stars.

Pat Kipping was the founding president of the Association for Media Literacy of Nova Scotia. She is currently developing THINK TV, a workshop manual for adult educators. She is the mother of two children who were raised in many environments including toxic Los Angeles, green New Zealand.—40 channels, three channels and no channels.

resources and programs to address media education. By 1990, its media education collection had grown to be one of the largest open collections in Canada. In 1991, The Centre for Literacy added a supplement to its quarterly newsletter, *Literacy Across the Curriculum*, entitled *Media Focus*, devoted to raising awareness of media education.

Since 1991, there have been many programs, conferences and public forums to meet the growing interest and awareness. [See BOX p. 5 for chronology].

The momentum increases

The 1992-93 academic year was a watershed for media education in English Quebec. There was interest, concern and often dissent around the issue; nevertheless, the energy and participation in workshops indicated a new sophistication and awareness of the topic.

The September 1992 CIFEJ forum on "Children, Moving Images and their Future," linked media education to ways of learning and perceiving our environments. It also addressed violence in popular culture and the future of interactive tv.

In October the first public forum in Quebec on the subject of commerical advertising in the classroom drew more than 100 people to debate the pros and cons of Montreal-based Youth News Network (YNN), a venture patterned on Chris Whittle's Channel One.

A Copyright Information Session provided an opportunity for positive dialogue between policy makers and educators on the complexities of copyright and current legislation. Panelists included Adam Ostry, Director General, Cultural Industries Office, Department of Communications and M.P. Sheila Finestone.

The next year saw sessions on virtual reality and computers. Eric McLuhan facilitated a discussion on media literacy followed by two sessions on Virtual Reality, given by Hal Thwaites of Concordia University's Communication Studies Department. The VR discussion continued when Stephen Marcus of the University of California facilitated a full-day workshop.

Topics in 1993-94 included a Polaroid Educational Workshop for teachers on uses of the camera for students of all ages and abilities. Robyn Quinn and Barrie McMahon, Australian teacher/researchers, gave a seminar on the Australian media education experience. Stephen Marcus returned in April of 1995 to present an all-day workshop entitled "Devising Writing in Cyberspace" which examined the promise and problems of using electronic text in educational settings.

Media education conferences

Because definitions of literacy were expanding to include a critical understanding of the media and interest was extending beyond academia, in June 1993, several francophone and anglophone organizations sponsored the province's first major conference on media education.

Awareness and Knowledge: Tools for Living with the Media / Vivre avec les medias: ca s'apprends! was co-sponsored by le Service aux collectivitées de l'Université du Québec and The Centre for Literacy in collaboration with le Departement des sciences de l'éducation et la Famille de l'éducation de UQAM. The two and a half-day conference was an important step in opening dialogue between Quebec's francophone and anglophone educators, parents, community workers, and media professionals. As a result of continuing interest in the new technologies and promises of digitization, notions of literacy and the media are being reshaped and conversations are becoming increasingly polemical. To address expanding and opposing ideas, The Centre for Literacy held its annual conference on June 22, 23, 1994 entitled, *New Technologies: Literacy, Media, & Culture.*

Teacher training

Many media education enthusiasts and parents decry the lack of attention given the topic in Faculties of Education. In teacher-training programs, the media as a context for study is obvious by its absence. As technologies merge, their impact on education is heightened, raising crucial questions about curriculum design and the role of teachers. Yet, current teacher training programs differ very little from those of a quarter century ago, posing a serious threat to the future of education.

It has become too convenient to explain away the problem by pointing to an aging, burnt-out, teaching population. Those conditions are realities. However, so is the technological void in the profiles of eager young graduates of Faculties of Education. New blood does not automatically suggest new technology.

In the summer of 1994, McGill University's Faculty of Education offered a Graduate Summer Institute which included a two-week intensive on Education and Social Issues *or* Media Education. Sessions were largely attended by in-service teachers rather than pre-service teachers. This may be partially explained by the fact that currently, there is no official position oriented toward media education in the department's programs. There is hope that McGill will be able to offer a media education strand in its Masters of Education program; however, this is pending approval. Also pending is an undergraduate course on media and technology.

Information highway—Maybe; Education reform—Definitely

In Quebec, as elsewhere, we are entering a period of reflection in media education as we re-examine our needs, concerns and achievements. Most educators agree that a true sign of learning is asking the right questions. Delegates to the conference on New Technologies in June 1994 began the process as they raised delicate and complex questions around definitions of culture, literacy, media, and education.

To redefine these concepts may be the first step in educational reform. It is folly for key players to maintain that all promises of new technologies are mere "hype". They may be correct in predicting that the super information highway will not be as super as some believe and in dismissing the notion that huge amounts of information will be digitally delivered to the masses. They are incorrect in assuming that the effects of technology will not radically change the way we read, write and process information; it has already irreversibly changed the face of communication. What is alarming is that it has changed very little about education and the academy.

As we reflect on where we are in media education, we must also re-examine where we have been. Focus groups at the New Technologies conference revealed some interesting trends. Discussion on the topic of technology illustrated that our needs, expectations and understanding vary widely. Despite the theme of new technologies and the fact that delegates flirted with new definitions and concepts, most of the discussion continued to center around tv, violence, values and advertising.

These observations offer us a direction as we continue to explore the topic. Do we continue to dwell on old themes because having developed the vocabulary to discuss them, we are more comfortable with these issues? Is it because satisfactory conclusions to previously asked questions continue to elude us? Perhaps it is because we have not yet formulated questions which go beyond those question? Or is it because the questions we *have* fo.mulated make us uncomfortable?

A Wish List

Solutions are not just around the corner. But this should not deter us. In fact, it should encourage us to initiate more dialogue. We have worked hard to attain goals and are to be congratulated, but it is now time to expand on that discourse. This is not the time for trepidation or complacency. We need to create strong networks of people with different and like ideas about definitions of education, technology, the media and culture. We need more opportunities to come together to agree and disagree and to identify our needs, which certainly are not only financial. We need, most of all, to be humble in recognizing that for all we have achieved, we are still pioneers in our ever-expanding technological and social environments. (JB)

A chronology of Quebec media education events, conferences & workshops – Workshops/events 1991-95

Date	Event	Organizer(s)
June 1991	A Media Study Day.	AMEQ & The Centre for Literacy
Summer 1991	Video workshop for The young Montrealers11 -16	CIFEJ & Goethe Institute
September 1991	Reality's Fantasy Roger De la Garde	Academic Alliance of English Teachers
June 1992	Len Masterman workshop	The Centre for Literacy
September1992	"Children, Moving Images and their Future."	CIFEJ
October 1992	Public forum on commerical advertising in the classroom.	Academic Alliance
October 1992	Copyright Information Session	Academic Alliance
January 1993	Montreal film director, Michael Rubbo on the videocamera in the classroom.	Academic Alliance
October 1993	Eric McLuhan on media literacy	Academic Alliance
November 1993	Virtual Reality I. Hal Thwaites	Academic Alliance
February 1994	Virtual Reality II. Hal Thwaites	Academic Alliance
April 1994	Virtual Reality in Classrooms, workshop Stephen Marcus	The Centre for Literacy
October 1994	Camera in the classroom Polaroid Educational Workshop	The Centre for Literacy
October 1994	Australian media education Robyn Quinn and Barrie McMahon	The Centre for Literacy
April 1995	Writing in Cyberspace workshop Stephen Marcus	The Centre for Literacy
Conferences/seminars		
June 1993	*Awareness and Knowledge: Tools for Living with the Media / Vivre avec les medias: ca s'apprends!*	co-sponsored by le Service aux collectivitees de l'Universite du Quebec and The Centre for Literacy in collaboration with le Département des sciences de l'education et la Famille de l'éducation de UQAM.
CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTIONS		
June 1994	*New Technologies: Literacy, Media, & Culture.*	The Centre for Literacy
Summer 1994	Graduate Summer Institute which included a two-week intensive on Education and Social Issues or Media Education	McGill University's Faculty of Education

Organizations involved in English media educaton in Quebec

- Academic Alliance of English Teachers is a cooperative project of The Association for Teachers of English of Quebec (ATEQ) and The Centre For Literacy.
- AMEQ is The Association for Media Education in Quebec
- CIFEJ is the International Centre of Films for Children and Young People
- The Centre for Literacy is a resource centre and teacher-training project.

Highlights from The National Media Literacy Conference
SEPTEMBER 1995

[The National Telemedia Council of Madison, Wisconsin and co-sponsors hosted the conference from September 22-24 at the Broyhill Center, Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

NATIONAL TELEMEDIA COUNCIL,INC.

Conference Chairperson Dr. David Considine welcomed participants from Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Canada and across the U.S. and invited them to choose from over 70 workshops over the 2 1/2 days. During this time, conversations and workshops indicated that discussion about media education represents a wide range of attitudes and understandings about the topic.

There was a notable gap between the protectionist stance which is clearly defensive about the media, and an approach which recommends education as a way to understand and cope with the media. (J.B.)

WHO WAS THERE

Keynote speakers	Selected presenters
David Bianculli	Julian Bowker
David Buckingham	Michael Considine
Milton Chen	Rich Fehlman
David Considine	Gail E. Haley
Barry Duncan	Renee Hobbs
Fred Garcia	Geoff Lealand
Roderick Hart	Bob McCannon
Susan Jeffords	Ladislaus Semali
John Pungente	Art Silverblatt
	Kristine Sorensen
	Sister Elizabeth Thoman

MAKING THE CONNECTION:
Substance abuse and media education

A main feature of the conference was a presentation which underscored the White House's current interest in the media and its impact on American culture. As the U.S. government becomes more involved in observing the consequences of substance abuse, policymakers are seeing media as a vehicle for curbing this abuse. Last June, at a Washington meeting held at the request of Fred Garcia, White House Deputy Director for Demand Reduction, leaders in the field of media literacy in the U.S. were invited to participate in discussions about drug abuse prevention and media literacy.

Mr. Garcia, a special guest of the conference, delivered some remarks from the Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Policy.

He urged participants to consider the seriousness of the abuse problem in the U.S. He cited statistics which indicated that while budgets for Headstart classes and School Lunch Programs are shrinking in that country, the corrections industry budget is skyrocketing. As an example, he referred to Colorado, where from 1980-1990 the education budget grew by 25% and the corrections budget grew by an overwhelming 416%. These statistics provide compelling evidence that while there *appears* to be no money for prevention, there is money for correction.

According to Garcia, the Substance Abuse Prevention Services in the U.S. need to be tied to media literacy, as adolescents are the key targets in both areas. He cited additional disturbing statistics. While the good news is that from 1979 until the present the number of drug users in the U.S. has been cut in half, the bad news is that as of 1991, there has been a sudden upward trend of drug use among adolescents. Garcia suggests that this may be because they no longer perceive drugs to be harmful. Whatever the cause, he sees media education as an integral part of the solution and encourages parents, teachers, policymakers and the media industry to work together to achieve a more media literate, healthier population.

What is interesting to note about connections being made by U.S. policy makers is the use of the terms media literacy and media education. In using television PSAs to increase awareness about the dangers of substance abuse, the White House may be confusing literacy *about* the media with literacy *through* the media. While both are worthy initiatives, they are not synonymous.

"Some of us have to teach...."
Rich Fehlman

Rich Fehlman of the University of Northern Iowa addressed his remarks to an audience of in-service and pre-service teachers. In-service teachers quickly related to his anecdote about being on his way to class, wheeling a tv and VCR, and meeting a colleague in the hall who good-naturedly greeted him with a smile, eyed the equipment and said, "Well, some of us have to teach...." This put media education in a familiar context for teachers who have attempted to bring it to their classes.

Fehlman used a six-minute clip from an episode of "The Wonder Years" to illustrate the importance of narrative as a key to learning and also to show that often, the same kind of critical stances are applicable to both print and non-print texts. He stressed the importance of a theoretical framework when addressing media education, as well as the crucial role of the learner/viewer. This, he pointed out, is necessary to counter the belief that when we watch tv, we do so passively. Even more disturbing is the feeling among colleagues that viewing is not learning, and that using non-print texts in the classroom is not teaching.

The use of comics in teaching, he stated, tends to elicit the same reaction, which he suggests may be encouraged by the way comics depict school and teaching. Often, they condone the very authoritative, top down model which is not likely to result in active learning.

Fehlman left participants with the strong message that we need to frame media education in an active pedagogy, for a passive mode of instruction cannot lead to an active model of learning. He stressed the need for a balance between the text and personal response to achieve this active involvement.

No need to panic; there is a third choice
David Bianculli

Author of *Tele-Literacy* and TV Critic for the *N.Y. Daily News*, David Bianculli shows an acute awareness of the links between the media and popular culture. In his keynote address he set out to allay fears that television is a threat to the fabric of society.

He began his address by stating firmly that 90% of TV is "awful"; but he quickly pointed out that 90% of any art form is this way. Bianculli confidently noted that some of what is on tv is worthwhile, and, as is the case with other art forms, viewers must seek out the good. He elaborated by putting violence in context and noted that Saturday morning programming is reprehensible. However, one way to get around this is to educate parents and children about what they are watching.

Bianculli compared cultural literacy and tele-literacy and cited one aspect of media literacy as the ability to know how to use the medium. For him, this ability involves an awareness of how to criticize the medium, and he encouraged teachers to use tv as a frame for teaching critical skills. TV is something young people are comfortable with, he pointed out, and it is more likely to get the message across.

Bianculli reminded his audience that throughout history, every dominant mass medium was attacked by the cultural elite—Plato on music and poetry; St. Augustine on stage plays. We should, therefore, not overreact to anxieties about tv. To add some levity, he closed with a Top Ten List of *Things About Media Literacy* which included "Turn Off TV Day". This he compared to blaming the refrigerator because you eat junk food. Also on the list was the Infobahn which, he says, has the potential to be little more than a CB with pictures.

The media literacy cup—half full or half empty?
David Considine

In arriving at an answer to the question, Considine reminded participants that we need to consider not only where we are in the media literacy movement, but also where we are going and how we are going to get there. As for how we have done to this point, he used the U.S. as the context for his remarks and suggested that they are addressing pockets of progress. More critical to the issue is whether these pockets of progress will lead to a critical mass.

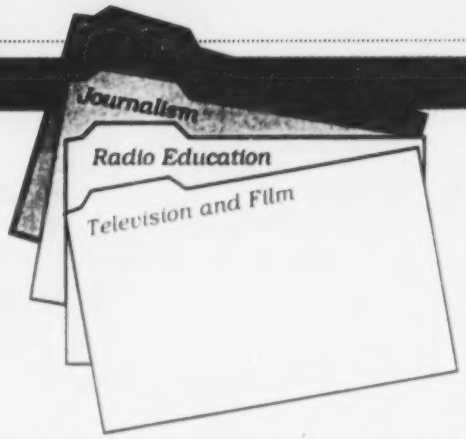
Considine stressed the need to remember that media education is not about product; it is about process and noted that this process must involve not only students and pre-service and in-service teachers, but also administrators. He recommends that pre-service training be done at this level as well.

Considine cautions against defining literacy as the ability to read and write print only, as this limited definition prepares people for yesterday's world. In expanding definitions of literacy, he urges teachers to include critical thinking skills in the process and not to rely on cognitive concepts in the classroom. He sees an inherent contradiction and a gap between the classroom, the curriculum and students' realities which need to be addressed. Media education across the curriculum is one way of reducing the gap, as media deals with feelings while school deals with facts. Considine reminded the audience that schools have historically despised the mass media, a reaction that confirms the system's preoccupation with the product rather then the people.

In plotting the course of media education, Considine suggests that we still have a long way to go. Most of what we are talking about, he contends, is not media literacy. It is about the real need to shift the emphasis of learning to the current cultural climate. This is a climate which demands change and demands that parents, teachers and administrators assume the role of change agents. Part of this change requires that we question the context in which media literacy occurs and not see it as something in addition to but something that complements the curriculum.

Considine ended on a serious note (in stating that cynicism occurs) when teachers assess the system of which they are a part. They are demoralized when they must reconcile how North American society trivializes teachers – even while it contends that it is supporting education.

REVIEWS



Media Files

The Ministry of Education of Quebec 1995

It is always rewarding to review and recommend a Canadian resource. In this case, the experience is especially positive as the resource originates in Quebec.

The media education movement has been a slow one, often marked by a need for easy-to-use classroom materials. Now there is *Media Files*, a project which results from collaboration between the Ministry of Education of Quebec (MEQ) and the Secondary Language Arts Advisory Council of the MEQ which formed the *Media Files* Productions Committee to develop tools for teaching about the media. After several years work, the Committee has produced a package which comprises four files: *Radio File; Television and Film File; Journalism File; Cultural Studies File.*

The philosophy of the *Media Files* is that we learn by doing. As a result, the package and the activities place equal importance on production and analysis. However, users will be relieved to note that the production activities in all the *Files*, including the *Radio Education File* and the *Television and Film File*, do not require elaborate technical equipment. For example, one exercise in *The Television and Film File* suggests a production acitivity which looks at visual composition: required materials are scissors and full-page magazine advertisements. Of course, teachers who work in schools that are equipped with cameras and editing suites, will find activities to suit them as well. Activities in both these files combine writing and technical exercises.

The *Journalism File* treats print as a medium, rather than simply using the newspaper format as a response to literature. It states that the newspaper and magazine are print texts which students do not read in the same fashion and for they same reason as they do novels and short stories. *Media Files* categorizes newspapers, tabloids and magazines as part of the contemporary media landscape.

The Cultural Studies File differs slightly from the other three only in that it acknowledges that this is a relatively new field. It takes into account the reality that as teachers, we are constantly surrounded by the texts of popular culture which we often do not fully understand. As a result, many teachers do not realize how important these texts are to their students. *The Cultural Studies File* sheds some light on this area by examining, and providing classroom activities for some of these texts.

While the package was developed for use in the English Language Arts curriculum at the secondary level, there is no reason why it must be limited to this subject area or this level. Some of the activities could easily be adapted for younger or older students in a number of other subject areas. All activities have been designed for students of mixed ability, and there is no prescribed way to use the *Files*. Teachers and students are encouraged to develop their own ways of using the package and, in the process, to create new activities.

Each File, designed to be kept in a binder for easy access and regular use, contains:

- Notes to the teacher
- Classroom activities
- A glossary of terms/techniques /concepts
- Evaluation strategies related to the activities
- A bibliography of professional and classroom texts
- A list of support materials

One of the best pieces of news about *Media Files* is that there are no copyright restrictions. Teachers are urged to copy and use as many of the activities as possible—and to share them with their friends.

Information: Judy Brandeis, The Centre for Literacy, (514) 931-8731 Extension 1415, Fax (514) 931-5181

NEWS & NOTES

CONFERENCES

Cultural Environment Movement Founding Convention
March 15 - 17, 1996
Webster University
St. Louis, MO
Information:
Tel: (215) 387-5303

Mediaworld '96: Issues/Inspirations
ATOM Media Education National Conference
QUT Brisbane, Australia
October 3 - 6, 1996
Abstracts should be sent by February 20 to ATOM (Qld), POBox 1005 Milton Q 4065, Australia. Fax (Kerry Peacey) +61 7 3832 1329 e-mail <CapalabaSHS@mailbox.uq.oz.au>

Pictures of a Generation on Hold: Youth in Film and Television in the 1990s
Ryerson Polytechnic University
Toronto, Ontario
May 18 - 19, 1996
Proposals should be sent by December 15 to Murray Pomerance or John Sakeris, Sociology, Ryerson Polytechnic University, 350 Victoria St., Toronto, Ontario, M5B 2K3 or e-mail: mpomeran@hermes.acs.ryerson.ca or jsakeris@hermes.acs.ryerson.ca.

AWARDS

The 1995 Jesse McCanse Award for Individual Contribution to Media Literacy was presented to Father John Pungente for his contribution to media education. Father Pungente was honoured at the National Media Conference in Boone, North Carolina, in September 1995.

The Merron Chorny Award was presented to Barry Duncan, President of Ontario's Association for Media Literacy for his outstanding work in the teaching of English Language Arts in Canada. Barry received the award at the Coalitions for Learning conference in Toronto in October.

TECHNOLOGY AND LITERACY

21st Century A to Z Literacy Handbook linking literacy with software

(ISBN 0 85473 426 0)
a handbook for education and training
By Christina Preston

This handbook compiled by Christina Preston, Director of Project Miranda at the University of London, telescopes the most contested current academic debates about literacy and technology into concise visually appealing summaries. According to Preston, "[the] book offers an overview of the role of computers in literacy, language and communications. The content is arranged for speedy access by busy non-specialist teachers and lecturers who also see themselves as facilitators and learners."

For the reader who wants more, there are references for further research; for the reader who wants only some signposts through the territory, this 80-page book does it. A glance at the table of contents [BOX 1] reveals the range of topics addressed. Excerpts [BOXES 2a,2b] reveal the depth of the summaries.

The second half of the book presents brief evaluations of specific software, mainly British, but also American, for PC, Apple and Acorn hardware. The display is easy to follow with annotation, target (elementary, senior, ABE, adult), publisher and price range. Although not comprehensive in coverage, the section provides an excellent starting point for teachers who are surveying the field.

Copies of the Handbook can be ordered for £9 plus £4.50 postage (overseas) from Project Miranda, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London,WC1H OAL

BOX 1

Contents of 21st Century A to Z Literacy Handbook

- Literacy, Culture and Change. A miscellany of viewpoints
- Domains of Literacy
- Telematics.. An introduction to change
  - Literacy today
  - Literacy in education
  - Teachers and learners
  - Software for in-service education
  - Hardware for in-service education
  - Keeping up with progress
  - Professional development
  - Teacher's playtime
- A to Z literacy index
  - Academic writing
  - Adventures and fiction
  - Authors and new literacies
  - Books
  - Choosing literacy software
  - Collaborative writing
  - Copyright and censorship
  - Differentiation
  - Drama
  - Editing
  - Electronic communication
  - Electronic publishing
  - Equal opportunities
  - ESOL and EFL
  - Illustration and graphics
  - Knowledge about language
  - Monitoring and assessment
  - Multimedia
  - Presentation and typing
  - Progression
  - Publishing the news
  - Reading
  - Research
  - Special educational needs
  - Spelling
  - Storytelling
  - Writer's Tutorials
  - Writing
- A to Z of literacy software Evaluation checklist
- References
- On-line services
- Bibliography: general titles
- Bibliography: NCET/NATE titles
- Contact addresses
- Educational software suppliers

BOX 2A

Domains of literacy

While Gutenberg's revolution made language in its written form more central, the current revolution is taking us both backwards and forwards into a new era of iconic forms of communication, backwards and forwards into hieroglyphics. Whether this is in the introduction of 'emoticons' through the exploitation of the visual potential of typographic elements, or the proliferation of the use of icons in so-called written texts, or ..the treatment of (verbal) text itself as merely an item in a visual composition, in a new multi-modal, multi-media form of text, what is happening is a fundamental challenge to the hitherto unchallenged cultural centrality of written language. This is indeed a revolution.

Gunther Kress, "Domains of Literacy." Preface to *21st Century A to Z Literacy Handbook*, .p. 1.

BOX 2B

Academic writing and new technologies

New literacies and new technologies are having a fundamental effect on the balance of the curriculum required by students in further and higher education to cope with the twenty-first century. Along with all the traditional skills, today's students need to develop the ability to handle hypermedia communication, to interpret data, and above all to make use of a variety of computer applications, at least at a basic level.

Set against this need for yet more new skills is the sad fact that many students reach higher education without the basic knowledge of literacy required for their courses - in many cases simply because English is not their first language.

The questions being asked by forward-looking academics include:

- Can technology be a stepping-stone rather than a stumbling block to students with literacy needs?
- Is the written academic essay the best way to prepare students for the tasks they will have to perform?

21st Century A to Z Literacy Handbook

What is Project Miranda?

Project Miranda is an education and industry partnership, based at the School of Education University of London, which develops strategies for teacher education in telematics— a term which refers to the potential for international connections in multimedia and information technology. It works for international industrial and government partnership in telematics education, support for literacy skills with computers and international on-line teacher education. – *See page. 11*

Alliance for Computers and Writing

The Alliance for Computers and Writing (ACW) is a U.S. based advocacy and support organization for teachers at all levels of education, K-12 and college. Founded in May 1993, it is a consortium of industry representatives (publishing and computer) and academics.

Purpose

The membership of the ACW believes that information technology brings many potential benefits to the teaching of writing. They recognize that the nature of writing in our society is changing, so see the need to include new elements in our writing courses at all levels, from the basic keyboarding skills to understanding of new rhetorical elements in electronic text to awareness of the new writing and idea-processing tools available to writers.

Activities

The priority of ACW is to help teachers use information technology in constructive ways to teach writing. ACW helps the regional Alliances set up and maintain training opportunities for teachers, create collaborative working partnerships, and maintain information on consulting resources. The Alliance also disseminates information through direct mailings, e-mail, computer and conferences, Internet resources, the telephone and other means.

To find out how you can participate in the ACW, contact: Trent Batson, 202-651-5494 twbatson@gallua.gallaudet.edu OR twbatson@gallua.bitnet; Fred Kemp,ykfok@ttacs.bitnet; John O'Connor, joconnor@gmuvax.bitnet; OR write to Alliance for Computers and Writing, Gallaudet University, HMB E252, 800 Florida Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002

NCAL

National Center on Adult Literacy

Adult Literacy Software Product Database

Version 2.0, 1995

The National Center on Adult Literacy has produced a database of adult literacy software listing more than 200 American resources for ABE, literacy, GED, and ESOL. Each screen gives a description of the software, target audience, the name and address of the publisher, and the cost and policy for preview or purchase. Although the layout is not as easy on the eyes as it could be, the information is invaluable and touches some of the most popular of commercial products as well as a number of lesser known resources.

To order a disk: Literacy Technology Laboratory, NCAL, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111; Tel: (215) 898-2100; Fax: (215) 898-9804; E-mail: ltl@literacy.upenn.edu

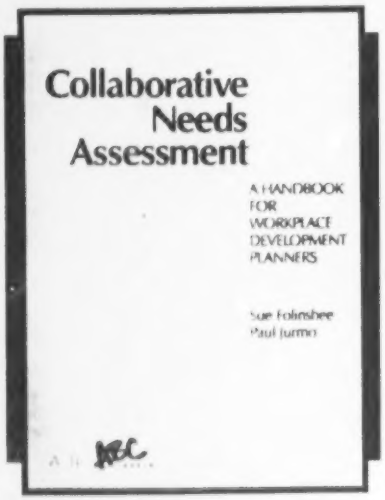
Software Evaluation Month – February 1996

Teachers, tutors — see how technology can work for you

The Centre for Literacy invites teachers and tutors to book appointments during the month of February to try out a selection of adult literacy and basic skills software. We have accessed demonstration copies of Canadian, American and British software and will order specific titles requested by teachers. Among the resources are The New Reading Disc, and selected titles from Interactive Knowledge, Curriculum Associates and more.

The Centre will stay open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. throughout the month. Because we have a limited number of computers, **time can be booked by appointment only .**

Call Peggy Killeen at 931-8731, local 1415, or fax 931-5181.



Building Collaborative Workplace Education

Review of
- *Collaborative Workplace Development: An Overview*
- *Collaborative Needs Assessment: A Handbook for Workplace*
- *Development:Planners Collaborative Evaluation: A Handbook for Workplace Development:Planners.*

by Sue Folinsbee and Paul Jurmo
ABC Canada Literacy Foundation, 1994

These handbooks provide a complete guide for setting up and monitoring a collaborative workplace education program. Collaborative as defined here means an effort that involves all the stakeholders in every step of the process. Management, unions, workers, and educators together establish the guidelines and participate in the needs assessment, the program provision and the evaluation. A large investment of time is required, but the commitment of those involved is the element that Folinsbee and Jurmo believe makes this model effective.

There are some workplace cultures where this approach would be untenable — authoritarian, top-down management would not be able to implement any program that gave all parties a voice. There are also some workplaces which have not yet accepted education as central to their survival. But this model of collaboration matches the workplace model which many commentators are claiming will be the norm for the businesses of the 21st century. As more organizations recognize their self-interest in supporting workplace education, these handbooks give them a blueprint for turning a vision into practice.

The two authors have pooled their North American expertise. Sue Folinsbee is familiar to anyone doing workplace literacy in Canada through her work as Director for Workplace Education at ABC CANADA. Paul Jurmo had worked for the Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL) while it existed in the U.S. and now runs a private consulting company. He is a regular on-line contributor to several American electronic discussions on literacy policy and workplace education.

The three books can be ordered from ABC CANADA, 1450 Don Mills Road, Don Mills, ON, Canada M3B 2X7, Tel: (416) 442-2292; Fax: (416) 442-2293. Singly, they cost $10, $20, and $20 each; the set is $40 without tax.

Learning with games

Review of
Wacky Word Games
by Margie Golick, illustrated by Jane Churchill
Pembroke Publishers Limited, 1995.

Margie Golick has done it again. A psychologist specializing in learning disabilities, Golick has argued for years that learning can happen in wonderful ways through play and games. On her travels, she collects decks of cards from every culture and period. One deck, carried in your pocket, she will tell you, can provide the base for hundreds of word and number games which can help children with learning disabilities pick up vital skills while having fun. To support her contention, she has written several how-to books for teachers and parents, including *Playing with Words*, *Deal Me In* and *Reading, Writing & Rummy*.

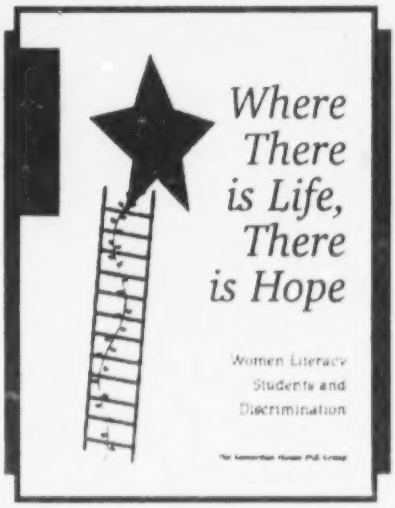
Now she has teamed up with illustrator Jane Churchill to produce *Wacky Word Game*, a madcap collection of rhyming games, homonyms, anagrams, and brain-teasers that challenge the eye and the ear. The colours are bold, the illustrations whimsical and the layout enchanting. Churchill has

worked with Golick before and has also developed multimedia titles for the National Film Board. Golick has been a consultant to The Children's Television Workshop. The media experience is evident. By the way, this little book is not just for children. Do *you* know whether **reading** or **arithmetic** makes more new words using only the letters in the word? The answers are at the back of the book.

Workplace education visited

The Fall 1995 issue of *Literacy Works*, the quarterly publication of the Saskatchewan Literacy Network, is built around the theme "Making workplace education work." It includes a collection of articles on outstanding Canadian programs as well as reviews and comments from the field, all presented in brief format and clear language.

Individual issues may be ordered for $8.00 (tax included) from Saskatchewan Literacy Network, P.O. Box 1520, Saskatoon, SK, Canada, S7K 2R3, Tel: (306) 653-7368; e-mail: nal178@broadway.Saskatoon.sk.ca



Women and participatory research

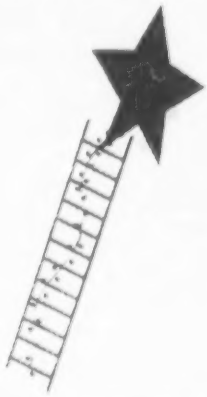
Review of
Where There is Life, There is Hope:
Women Literacy Students and Discrimination
Samaritan House PAR Group, Brandon, MN, 1995

In the past five years, publications by literacy students have proliferated across the country thanks to the National Literacy Secretariat. These materials would rarely find publishers in the commercial sector, but many of them are favourites of students who recognize themselves in the stories. Teachers have also benefited from the sharing of ideas and approaches.

For teachers working with women in a popular education setting, a group in Manitoba has produced *Where There is Life, There is Hope*, a description of a participatory research action (PAR) project that combines a guide to the process, a selection of stories from the women who worked in it, reflections from the animator and a bibliography of useful resources. Using a Freirian process of "developing critical consciousness," the animator lead a group of literacy students through the steps of identifying an issue central to their lives - in this case, discrimination— then focusing research questions —"What does discrimination mean to us?" and "How has discrimination affected our lives?" The women researched the meaning of the word, told stories that located it for themselves, analyzed what it meant and finally identified actions they could take in response.

The book is laid out clearly with effective graphics taken from drawings the women made as part of their search (See In the Classroom, p. 9). For teachers who want the learning to move beyond the classroom, to address social issues, this small text can show one way of breaching the walls.

Where There is Life, There is Hope can be ordered for $5 from the Literacy and Continuing Education Branch, Department of Education and Training, Rm 107, 340 Ninth Street, Brandon, MN, Canada R7A 6C2, Tel: (204) 726-6027, Fax: (204) 726-6583.



Resources are catalogued and may be borrowed in person or by mail (postage covered by the borrower). Documents should be requested by number. Documents can be consulted in The Centre from Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

In addition to the materials listed in the catalogue, we have directories of program and services, bibliographies on many subjects, international periodicals and newsletters, catalogues of learning materials, tapes/videos, and hanging files. We are connected to the National Adult Literacy Database and Internet. Printouts on specific subject headings can be requested at cost.

Information: Peggy Killeen (514) 931-8731, local 1415; literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca.

720.006
•Bayley, Linda.
Opening Doors for Adult New Readers.
Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press, 1984.

720.009
•British Columbia Library Association. *Libraries and Literacy Summit '94: Final Report with Strategy and Recommendations.* Burnaby, B.C.: British Columbia Library Association, 1994.

720.007
• Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy. *Planning Adult Literacy Services: Options for Library Involvement.* University Park, PA: Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, 1987.

720.002
•Lyman, Helen Hugueno.
Library Materials in Service to the Adult New Reader. Chicago IL: American Library Association 1974.

720.003
• Moodey, Edgar C.
The Fraser-Hickson Library: An Informal History. London England: Clive Bingley, 1977.

720.
• Quezada, Shelley.
The Role of Libraries in Providing Services to Adults Learning English. Washington, D.C: Center for Applied Linguistics. ERIC Digest. National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education, 1991.

720.008
• Quigley, Thomas, Stephanie Kripps, and Tim Firth.
Vancouver Public Library Literacy Evaluation Project. Vancouver, B.C: Province of British Columbia Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour, 1994.

Literacy & health:
an annotated bibliography

This list of articles from the past five years contains access information and full summaries. Available for $5 to cover printing and mailing.

Make cheques payable to

The Centre for Literacy 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, H3Z 1A4, Canada.

Sample bibliography: Health and literacy

Title: **Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine: A Shortened Screening Instrument**

Source: Family Medicine 25(6): 391-5 June 1993

Summary:
Due to increased awareness of the link between literacy and health, tests have been developed to assess the literacy level of patients in order to determine their needs in terms of health care information. An analysis of 'REALM,' a quick, efficient, and easy-to-administer literacy test is provided within this paper. 'REALM' was found to be a valid and reliable instrument with practical value as a rapid estimate of patient literacy and as an additional tool to address the health care needs of low-literacy patients.

Title: **Fotoplatica: An Innovative Teaching Method For Families With Low Literacy and High Stress**

Source: Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing 1993, vol. 10, no.3: 112-4

Summary:
An overview of Fotoplatica which is, in this case, pictorial posters used to explain procedures and pain experienced during cancer treatment. The target group for this experiment was illiterate Latino families whose children have cancer. The method was found to be extremely effective in creating a higher level of understanding and in decreasing anxiety.

720.001
• Ryan, Jenny L.
Literacy Collection: Development in Libraries: A Bibliography. 2nd rev. ed. Syracuse, NY: Laubach Literacy International, 1989

720.005
•The New York State Education Department. *Evaluating Library Literacy Programs: A Manual for Reporting Accomplishments.* Albany, NY: The New York State Education Department, 1991.

720.004
•Zweizig, Douglas L., Jane Robbins, and Debra Wilcox Johnson.
Libraries and Literacy Education: Comprehensive Survey Report. Madison, WI: School of Library and Information Studies, 1988.

Chronological Conference Listing

Local

Learning Disabilities Association of Quebec
March 14 -16, 1996
Montreal, QC
Information: LDAQ.
Tel: (514) 847-1324;
Fax: (514) 954-2256

SPRINGBOARDS '96
"Creating Community"
April 18 - 19, 1996
Montreal, QC
Information: SPRINGBOARDS '96, Judith Schurman, 133 UnionBoulevard, Saint Lambert, QC, J4R 2M7.
Tel: (514) 935-6357;
Fax: (514) 935-1099

National/ International

MLA 1995
December 26 - 30, 1995
Chicago, Il
Guidelines: September 1995 issue of *PMLA* (pp 556-67)

CCCC Winter Workshop on Teaching Composition to Undergraduates
"Curricular Changes: Writing Across the Curriculum, Technology and Writing, Assessment and Writing"
January 3 - 6, 1996
Clearwater Beach, FL

International Reading Association
Adolescent/Adult Literacy: Making a Difference
February 2 - 4, 1996
Washington, D.C.
Information: Adolescent/Adult Literacy Program Committee, IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139.
Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226;
Fax: (302) 731-1057.

Technology and Learning
February 23 - 24, 1996
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Information: Lance Rivers, Department of English, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901.

World Conference on Literacy
"Improving Literacy, Changing Lives: Innovations and Interconnections for Development"
March 12 -15, 1996
Philadelphia, PA
Information: World Conference on Literacy , University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111. Tel: (215) 898-2100;
Fax: (215) 898-9804.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
51st Annual Conference
March 16 -19, 1996
New Orleans, LA
Information: ASCD, Conference Registration, 1250 North Pitt Street, Alexandra, VA 22314-1453.
Tel: (703) 549-9110

Pedagogy of the Oppressed
with Paolo Freire
March 21 - 23, 1996
University of Nebraska
Omaha, NE
Information: Peter L. Heineman, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1313 Farnum Street, Omaha, NE 68182-0335. Tel: (402) 595-2255;
Fax: (402) 595-2345;
e-mail: pheineman@unomaha.edu

TESOL '96
Thirtieth Annual Convention
March 26 -30, 1996
Chicago, IL
Information: TESOL, 1600 Cameron Street, #300, Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel: (703) 836-0774;
Fax: (703) 836-7864;
e-mail: tesol@tesol.edu

College Composition and Communication (4Cs)
March 27 - 30, 1996
Milwaukee, WI

The Conference Board of Canada
3rd International Partnership Conference: Business and Education Working Together
April 13 - 16, 1996
Toronto, ON
Information: Helen Zurawski, Conference Board of Canada, 256 Smyth Road, Ottawa, ON, K1H 8M7
Tel:(613) 526-3280;
Fax: (613) 526-4857;
e-mail:
zurawski@conferenceboard.ca

6th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women
April 22 -26, 1996
Adelaide Australia
Information: Festival City Conventions, P.O. Box 986, Kent Town, South Australia 5071
Tel: 61-8 363 1307;
Fax: 61-8 363 1604.

41st Annual Convention International Reading Association
April 28 - May 3, 1996
New Orleans, LA
Information: Division of Research, IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139. Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226
Fax: (302) 731-1057.

Workplace Learning: The Strategic Adventure & National Workjplace Literacy Program
April 29 - 30, 1996
Milwaukee, WI
Information: Workplace Learning Conference, Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsis-Madison, 964 Educational Sciences Building, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53791-9505.
Tel:1-800-446-0399

New England Alliance for Computers and Writing
Third Annual Conference
July 11 - 12, 1996
Salem State College
Salem, MA
Information: Rick Branscomb, Department of English, Salem State College, Salem, Ma 01970 e-mail: cbranscomb@mecn.mass.edu

International Whole Language Umbrella Conference
"Celebrating Literacy"
August 1 - 4, 1996
St. Paul, MN
Information: Tel: (612) 255-4887
e-mail:
umbrella96@tigger.stcloud.msus.edu

Northeast Whole Language Conference
August 11 - 14, 1996
Johnson State College
Johnson, VT
Information: John Thomas Poeton, 32 Plateau Drive, Barre, VT 05641. Fax: (802) 479-3235; e-mail: JPOETON@aol.com

1996 European Writing Conferences
of EARLI Special Interest Group Writing and Computers Association
October 23 -25, 1996
Barcelona, Spain
Information: 1996 European Writing Conferences, Institute of Educational Sciences, University of Barcelona, Edifici de Migdia, Pasco Vall d'Hebron 171, 08035 Barcelona, Spain, or EARLI SIG WRITING, Liliana Tolchinsky, Tel: 34(3) 428 2142 ext 3384; Fax: 34(3) 402 1016; E-mail: SIGWRITI@TRIVIUM.GH.UB.ES

The Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking
1995-96 series of workshops and conferences. Topics include: Writing to Learn, Writing and Thinking, Writing to Learn Math and Science, Teaching Women's Writing , Arguing Differently, and more...
Information: Bard College, P.O. Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, USA 12504-5000. Tel: (914) 758-7484.

Summer Institutes 1996

Computers in Writing-Intensive Classrooms
June 17 - 28, 1996
Michigan Technological University, Houghton, MI
Facilitators: Dr. Cynthia Selfe & Dr. Gail Hawisher
Information: Conference Department, Michigan Technological University, 1400 Townsend Drive, Houghton, MI 49931-1295. Tel: (906) 487-2263; e-mail: dkbasto@mtu.edu

Literacy B.C. Summer Institute
July 15 - 26 U.B.C.
information Mary Thompson Boyd (604) 684-0624

95/96 THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY & DAWSON COLLEGE

WORKSHOPS SEMINARS

Homeless women, literacy and technology

Leader: Ludo Sheffer, University of Pennsylvania
Date: Monday, January 22, 1996
Time: 6:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Verbal and visual literacy: words and icons

Leader: Gunther Kress, University of London
Date: Thursday, February 8,1996
Time: 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Women, literacy and social change
(in collaboration with Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW) celebrating International Women's Day)

Leaders: Jane Hugo, Laubach Literacy America
Peggy Maguire, Germantown Women's Educational Project
Date: Thursday, March 7, 1996
Time: 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Critical thinking and writing in all disciplines.
Leader: Lynn Quitman Troyka, City University of New York (CUNY)
Date: Friday, April 12, 1996
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Media education isn't hard to teach
Leader: Chris Worsnop, Media educator
Date: Friday, April 26, 1996
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

People outside institutions are concerned about issues of access to new technology, as seen from this excerpt from a NEWS RELEASE, Ottawa, November 8, 1995:

National Alliance for a Connected Canada

A broad cross-section of Canadians have formed the Alliance for a Connected Canada to ensure that basic citizens' interests and needs are the primary focus in the public policy debate about Canada's Information Highway.

The alliance brings together groups representing Canadians from a number of sectors in Canada. These groups will work together to:

- promote vigorous and open debate, and build understanding of communication policy issues;
- take concerted action to shape Canada's communication policies;
- influence the design and evolution of basic and enhanced networks and electronic public spaces, with social equity and equality of opportunity as priorities;
- present policies that represent the public interest in the construction of the Information Highway.

The first task of this alliance will be to ask the CRTC for public hearings to define "basic and essential" services with respect to telephone and broadcasting/cable services as well as evolving information highway services. This should include mechanisms to review and revamp these definitions as technology evolves.

Among the founding members of this alliance are the Telecommunications Workers Union, the Coalition for Public Information, Telecommunities Canada, La Federation Nationale des Associations de Consommateurs du Quebec (FNAQ) and the Council of Canadians.

For further information: Andrew Reddick, Public Interest Advocacy Centre, Tel: 613-562-4002; Fax: 613-562-0007;
E-mail: 74051.3157@compuserve.com

CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The Council of Writing Program Administrators WPA

The Research Grant committee of the Council of Writing Program Administrators calls for proposals to investigate the intellectual work of the writing program administrator. Maximum awards of $2000 may be given; average awards are $1000. Topics might include, but are not limited to, making curricular content responsive to diversities of race, gender, and class; responding to budget restrictions; dealing with competing models of program evaluation; "going public" with writing program concerns; making the work of the WPA more collaborative or collegial; coping with mandated need to design composition courses that link up with " content" courses in other disciplines; making writing program administration more recognized in tenure and promotion decisions.

Information on proposal requirements: Kristine Hansen, Chair, WPA Research Grant Committee, English Department, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602.
Deadline: January 1,1996.

Third National Writing Across the Curriculum Conference

Preparing for 2000: 27 Years of Writing Across the Curriculum

February 6 - 8, 1997
Charleston, South Carolina

Proposals are invited for individual presentation and entire sessions. This conference provides an opportunity for faculty and administrators to reflect on the history of the movement, to review current practices, and to plan for the future.

Proposals may address the following: administration, assessment, curriculum, economics, faculty development, history of WAC, interdisciplinary collaboration, student learning, politics, research, school/college collaboration, teaching, technology, theory, writing, and other forms of communicating across the disciplines.

Information on proposals: Carl R. Lovitt, Clemson University Pearce Center, 401 Strode Tower, Clemson, SC 29634-1504, Tel: (80) 656-5418/656-1520; Fax (803)656-1846; E-mail: lcarl@clemson.edu
Deadline: May 15, 1996

An overview of the 1995 Institute and short articles on various applications of technology in adult literacy focusing on the promise and the peril. Includes Ontario Literacy Communications Project, STAPLE, Georgia Tech Satellite Literacy Project, New Reading Disc and more.

Publication will be available in December 1995. Cost: $10 plus $3 postage and handling, includes GST. Make cheques payable to: The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, Canada, H3Z1A4.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Bridging the Centuries

THIRD NATIONAL LITERACY CONFERENCE

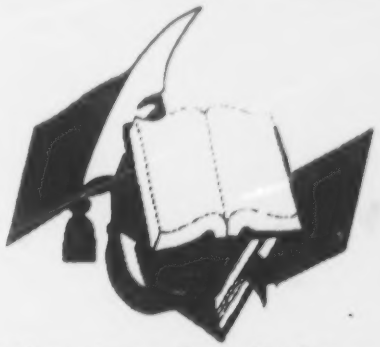
Bridging the Centuries: Emerging Visions of Literacy

Winnipeg, Manitoba
October 16-19, 1996
sponsored by
Canadian Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, The Manitoba Association of Teachers of English, and others

Theme: As we stand on the threshold of a new millennium, we are challenged to re-examine the nature and purpose of literacy education as literacy is defined and redefined within society's changing demands for literate citizens. *"Bridging the Centuries: Emerging Visions of Literacy"* provides the forum in which to address critical issues related to the multiple literacies required of our children, ourselves, and our society. The program will present new developments in thinking about literacy in relation to contemporary conceptions of curriculum, and professional practice as reflected in a variety of current local and national trends and initiatives.

Deadline: February 15, 1996

Information: Irene Schmidt, Garden Valley Collegiate, 736 Main Street, Winkler, MB, Canada, R6W 4C8. Tel: (204) 325-8008; fax: (204) 325-5894; e-mail: ischmidt@MINET.gov.MB.CA



Librarians Can Make a Difference: Literacy and the Library

May 17, 1996
Graduate School of Library and Information Studies
McGill University, Montreal, Quebec

North America faces a serious problem that is already affecting our economic and social well being. Literacy is a chronic problem. Libraries face a new clientele that has a right to access information. Specialized training and collections need to be offered to a growing population of individuals of all ages who wish to learn how to read and write.

Librarians can make a difference by opening their libraries to these clients and helping them to acquire new skills and attitudes which can make them leaders in their community.

This workshop will focus on literacy in general and its impact in particular on libraries. We will explore literacy concepts and look at the experience of the Fraser Hickson Public Library (Montreal) in developing collections and services for literacy.

Information: Dorothy Carruthers, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, McGill University, 3459 McTavish Street, Rm MS57F, Montreal, Quebec, Canada SH3A 1Y1. Tel.: (514) 398-6387; Fax: (514) 398-7193; E-mail:DOROTHY@GSLIS.LAN.MCGILL.CA

PUBLICATIONS

DRAWING:
A link to Literacy

Stunning drawings and moving texts on social and personal issues that touch us all – war, race, love, AIDS, pollution – produced by college students.

To order a copy send a cheque for $10.00 plus $3.00 shipping & handling.

Cheque is payable to The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, H3Z 1A4.

Information on special price for multiple copies: (514) 931-8731, local 1415.

The Centre for Literacy in cooperation with Georgia Institute of Technology

P R E S E N T S

Literacy, Learning, and Technology

SUMMER INSTITUTE 1996

CURRENT THINKING, NEW DIRECTIONS.

June 26 - 28, 1996, Montreal, Quebec

Topics include teacher training, teacher support; technology for basic skills in the workplace; and technology for disabilities —physical and learning.

Participants and presenters from Canada, the United States and the U.K.

BROCHURES AVAILABLE IN JANUARY.

Information: Peggy Killeen, The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, Canada, H3Z 1A4, Tel: (514) 931-8731, ext 1415; Fax: (514) 931-5181; E-mail: literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca

To subscribe, complete this form and mail it with your cheque to:
The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3Z 1A4

I enclose a cheque for ☐ $14 ☐ $75 ☐ $130 (Please mark choice)

Make cheque payable to The Centre for Literacy.
On multiple orders outside Montreal, please add $5.00 additional postage.

Name: _____

Institution: _____ Dept: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Single annual subscription	**$14**
Multiple annual subscription (10)	**$75**
Multiple subscription (20)	**$130**

Back issues available

For special prices on institutional subscriptions of 100 or more, call (514) 931-8731, ext. 1415

Literacy Across the Curriculum

is published four times during the academic year by The Centre for Literacy

WINTER 1996 Vol. 11 No. 4

Literacy across the curriculum

Including Medi Focus

Connecting literacy in the schools, community and workplace

Participation and the pleasure principle

or the P's & Q's of literacy

"Nobody funds pleasure." That was the advice I received a few years ago from a colleague after reading a grant proposal that I had written. "Move the pleasure principle down to the last paragraph."

Worldwide, in industrialized and developing countries, researchers know that rates of participation in adult literacy and basic education are dismally low. What accounts for this phenomenon, and is there anything that policy makers and providers could do to change it? Is there reason to think that reinserting pleasure and reconsidering the promises attached to literacy could make a difference? Can technology increase motivation and participation?

These questions were the focus of a Winter Institute on Literacy and Technology held in Atlanta in January 1996 hosted by Georgia Tech and The Centre for Literacy. Much of our discussion revolved around what I have dubbed the "P" words of literacy — participation, product, play, poetry, pleasure and promise.

Participation and non-participation

Participation is the term used for the number of learners registered in programs. The main body of research on participation and non-participation is American [See Resources, p. 14], and dominated by a few names, including Beder, Valentine, Darkenwald, and more recently, Quigley. They have investigated the reasons why people either do or do not participate in adult education, in particular, basic education and literacy.

It is obviously much easier to find and interview participants than non-participants. At the January Institute, presenter David Kring, a colleague of Beder's, described an ERIC database search on the topic for the years 1992-95. When he used the keyword

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE

4 To Ponder
5 A grammar of the visual
6 Literacy & technology
- Evaluating TV for teaching literacy
- Adult Literacy Media Alliance
- Adults with dyslexia
9 In the classroom: Poetry
11 Reviews
14 Resources: Participation in literacy & ABE
15 Conferences
17 Announcements

Literacy across the curriculum

The Centre for Literacy
3040 Sherbrooke Street West,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada,
H3Z 1A4

Editor: **Linda Shohet**
Layout & design: Ponctuation GRAFIX
(514) 733-5924

Dépot légal – 1991

ISSN 1192-3288
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

The Centre for Literacy/Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.

Literacy for the 21st century
Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"participation," he drew 7306 entries: "participation" and "adult" brought up 862; "participation, ""adult," and "literacy," 289. When he tried "non-participation," the number of entries dropped to 17; "non-participation" and "adult," brought up 5; and "non-participation,""adult," and "literacy," only 3.

Why adults do not participate

Kring traced the development of the issue, beginning with the first national American study in1965 which looked at participation in adult education. The researchers identified two categories of barriers— external/situational which affected younger adults and women, and internal/dispositional which affected older adults.

A study by Patricia Cross in 1981 named three categories of deterrents: situational, dispositional and institutional, the last involving discouraging practices and procedures in schools.

It was during the 1980s that studies began to look more carefully at individuals,

specifically at psychosocial factors such as negative expectations of programs and negative self-evaluation. They also addressed informational issues— that is, lack of information about available programs and the failure of many adults to seek such information.

Additional factors appeared in a scale published in 1984 by Scanlan and Darkenwald to measure deterrents to participation. These included disengagement, family or work constraints, cost, perceived lack of benefit and lack of quality programs.

A social perspective

In the late 1980s, some researchers inserted a sociological perspective, suggesting reasons for the problem other than personal and institutional ones.

These studies focused on education as a social practice organized and distributed by the middle class to maintain and reproduce the dominant culture. Seen from this frame, an individual's position in society becomes a powerful factor in non-participation.

Researchers such as Quigley suggested a resistance theory to explain it.

Non-participants, he believes, are not resisting education, but the imposition of a dominant culture and values.

.....Product.....participation.....

Negative experience of schooling

Finally, recent empirical studies carried out in Iowa with groups of participants and non-participants have reduced the number of premises.

According to Hal Beder, who has been studying this question for two decades, non-participants have a low perception of need, perceive the required effort to overcome constraints as too great, have a dislike for school, or find themselves in a situation that gives them no free time for study. Beder suggests that school-based approaches will not work as the majority of non-participants have had a negative experience of school.

Participants, on the other hand, have been motivated by a desire to get educated or to improve themselves.

The product

What does this mean for policy and practice? The field has been poor at marketing our product. We have tended to look at clients in literacy and ABE as homogenous groups when they are divided into a number of sub-groups with different profiles and needs. We have offered mainly "one size fits all" programming.

The field has been poor at marketing our product. We have tended to look at clients in literacy and ABE as homogenous groups when they are divided into a number of sub-groups with different profiles and needs. We have offered mainly "one size fits all" programming.

Poetry.....Promises.....Quality.....

Kring suggests that we need to borrow some practices from market research and make a better match between client and product. We have to use a marketing mix of product (Tangibly—what are we "selling?"); place (Where are we offering the product? This has both physical and symbolic significance.); price (What is the actual cost and the opportunity offered?); and promotion (Are we using advertising and publicity in a persuasive way that corresponds to the clients' perceptions?)

Promises

One of the final presenters at the Institute cautioned us to think carefully about what we advertise. Dan Wagner, Director of the National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL) in Philadelphia, talked about the unrealistic promises that have characterized literacy as a field. We have regularly promised to eradicate illiteracy within specific time frames or to provide jobs to participants who complete programs. Wagner believes we have to make fewer promises, examine the possibilities more carefully and develop quality provision in ways that have never been tried before. He invites the literacy community to practice "truth in advertising" when it sets about marketing its product(s).

Pleasure and pragmatism

I return to the starting point. So much of current practice is driven by economic issues that our programs, which are products, have come to be more pragmatic than pleasurable. I believe that a balance has to be found.

If we are to continue to reach only small percentages of the potential clients, the funding will eventually disappear.

For those who argue that pleasure has nothing to do with it, this issue of *LAC* offers glimpses of programs and practices that have managed to motivate learners by making learning pleasurable, for example using traditional literature — poetry— or using modern technology — television.

If most non-participants dislike school and do not perceive a need, then setting up more courses that look like school will not attract them.

Pleasure, on the other hand, is easy to sell. We need to move it back to the first paragraph. [L.S.]

1 On meanings of technology

In the twentieth century, however, the linguistic convention has gradually changed. *Technology* has expanded rapidly in both its denotative and connotative meanings. It is now widely used in ordinary and academic speech to talk about an unbelievably diverse collection of phenomena - tools, instruments, machines, organizations, methods, techniques, systems, and the totality of all these things in our experience.

The shift in meaning from something vague, expansive, and highly significant can be traced through the definitions in Webster's unabridged dictionary. In *Webster's Second International* (1909) the word is said to mean "industrial science, the science or systematic knowledge of the industrial arts, especially of the more important manufactures." In *Webster's Third International* (1961), however, the definition blossomed into the following: "the totality of means employed by a people to provide itself with the objects of material culture." Today, even this definition seems too narrow, for if we notice how the word is actually employed, it certainly covers much more than just the material objects of culture. Some of the most intriguing new technologies have to do with the alteration of psychological or spiritual states.

Langdon Winner, *Autonomous Technology*, MIT Press, 1992, pp. 8 -9.

2 On jobs & literacy in Newfoundland

Look, boys, things is hard. I needs a job. They said they had the perfect thing for me. Saving it all these trial years. And it was right across the Omaloor . Bay, a glove factory! Right out there, Quoyle, right out there by your place on the point. They was going to make gloves there, leather gloves. Made it sound like the government built the thing just for me. They said I was a natural for a job due to my experience in the tannery. I was practically a master craftsman of the leather trade! I could prob'ly get an overseer's job! Wasn't I some glad? They got the ferry going. Big crowd showed up to go to work first day. Well, you believe it, we went over there, went inside, there was a lot of people standing around, a nice cafeteria, big stainless steel vats for dyeing, sewing machines and cutting tables. Only two things they didn't have—somebody who knew how to make gloves, and the leather. See, the leather for the gloves was supposed to come from the tannery I worked at years before, but it had folded and nobody ever told the guys building the glove factory, nobody ever told Canada Manpower. That was that.

"So I'm on my way home across the bay, the ferry's making its second and last run. And I'm thinking. I'm thinking, 'If I'd knew this sucker didn't have no leather I could have saved myself a trip.' Now, how do you know things? You read 'em in the paper! There wasn't no local paper. Just that government mouthpiece down to St. Johns, The Sea Lion. So I says, not knowing nothing about it, hardly able to write a sentence—I only got to "Tom's Dog' in school—but I made up my mind that if they could start a glove factory with no leather or nobody that knew how to make 'em, I could start a newspaper.

"So I goes over to Canada Manpower and I says, 'I want to start a newspaper. You fellows think you can help me out?'

" 'How many people you gonna employ?' they says. I takes a wild flyer. 'Fifty. Once I gets going,' I says. 'Course there has to be a training period,' I says. 'Develop skills.' They ate it up. They give me boxes and boxes of forms to fill out. That's when my trouble begun, so I got Billy Pretty to give over his fishing and come on board. He writes a beautiful hand, can read like a government man. We done it.

"They sent me off to Toronto to learn about the newspaper business. They give me money. What the hell, I hung around Toronto what, four or five weeks, listening to them rave at me about editorial balance, integrity, the new journalism, reporter ethics, service to the community. Give me the fits. I couldn't understand the half of what they said. Learned what I had to know finally by doing it right here in my old shop. I been running Gammy Bird for seven years now, and the circulation is up to thirteen thousand, gaining every year. All along this coast. Because I know what people want to read about. And no arguments about it.

E. Annie Proulx, *The Shipping News*, New York NY: Touchstone, Simon & Shuster, 1993, pp. 6-7.

A highly recommended read. [L.S.]

A grammar of the visual?

'Is language actually the best medium for dealing with an information economy?'

'Is information overload one of the effects of using language as a medium in today's world? And, could we cope better with more of the visual?'

Gunther Kress is interested in the changing nature of communication as post-industrial Western cultures shift to economies more dependent on information than on material goods. "Is language actually the best medium for dealing with an information economy?" he asks. "Is information overload one of the effects of using language as a medium in today's world? And, could we cope better with more of the visual?"

From these questions we move towards redefining literacy. Kress, a professor at the School of Education, University of London, engaged a group of listeners in an animated exchange at The Centre for Literacy in early February. Kress has done years of research in linguistics and in children's acquisition of reading and writing, but his more recent interests have lead him to combine these fields with studies of social and industrial organization and the impacts of technology.

Behind most language policies i.e. "Everyone must speak standard English." – is a common sense notion of language as an inventory of signs, a stable system, with which teachers must familiarize students. But language is actually a dynamic resource of materials from which we constantly reshape and remake meaning. Since economies of the future are going to require people who are innovative, adaptive and creative, can we continue to to think about literacy as a fixed system and focus our teaching on words and sentences?

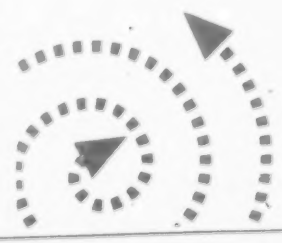
Kress believes we have to talk about literacy in terms of entire texts, texts in which language is not necessarily at the centre, texts in which the visual is emerging as an equally important medium of communication.

He suggests that the move towards the visual may be partly a recognition of the cultural plurality of societies, that it is easier to achieve social cohesion through images than through language. He often uses the example of Dick Bruna's children's books which rely heavily on brightly coloured images centred on the page. Readers create their own stories around the image. Kress feels that this style reflects a social reality in the Netherlands where cultural diversity has been a value, and that the increasing dominance of images in other cultures reflects a similar social shift.

If this is so, Kress says, we have to become familiar with the grammar of the visual which he claims is parallel to alphabets in language. He demonstrates with pages from a variety of newspapers, pages from books, screen layouts— that the organization of images on a page/screen is not purely aesthetic or arbitrary. There are cultural expectations about what certain images mean and what meaning they carry if moved from one position to another.

This conception of communication calls for new models of literacy and new models of teachers training that incorporate a grammar of the visual. [LS]

Suggested reading:
Gunther Kress & Theo Van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, Routledge, 1996.

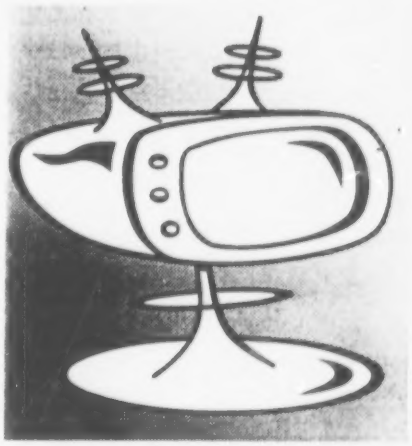


LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY

Trying to reach adults where they are

The question of participation in adult literacy programs is complicated by the fact that most adults who are identified by tests and surveys as being in need of service do not perceive themselves that way. The International Survey of Adult Literacy (IALS) corroborates this across countries.

Some researchers argue that in coming years, the numbers of adults who recognize their need will grow as jobs disappear and technology pervades more of our daily social communication. Medical and banking services are already heavily automated, and as manpower offices reduce staff and replace them with electronic kiosks, even basic job and education searches will require reasonably high literacy skills. Other thinkers believe that these moves will disenfranchise an increasing portion of the



population who will stop being counted among those in need because they will have dropped off the bottom end of the continuum just as those who currently have stopped looking for work no longer show up in unemployment statistics.

While the impact of social policy on people with literacy needs is unclear, educators worldwide agree that only a small portion of potential learners are being reached by established programs. There is also a consensus that new approaches will have to use non-traditional media and sites to touch the target population. Television is one of the approaches that has been used in a limited way in the past but is being explored more as research shows that people with low literacy are avid TV watchers.

Two current American projects, one in place for several years and one in development, illustrate the different intentions that can be incorporated into television-based literacy initiatives. One is the Georgia Tech Satellite Literacy Program, the other the Adult Literacy Media Alliance.(LS)

GeorgiaTech Satellite Literacy Program

Evaluating TV for teaching literacy

The Georgia Tech Satellite program was described in *LAC*, Summer 1995. It offers a live-broadcast television class several times a weeks to 97 remote classrooms across Georgia where on-site teachers work with a common curriculum and link their students by telephone to the TV class. Students can call in questions which are aired for all listeners and incorporated into the lesson.

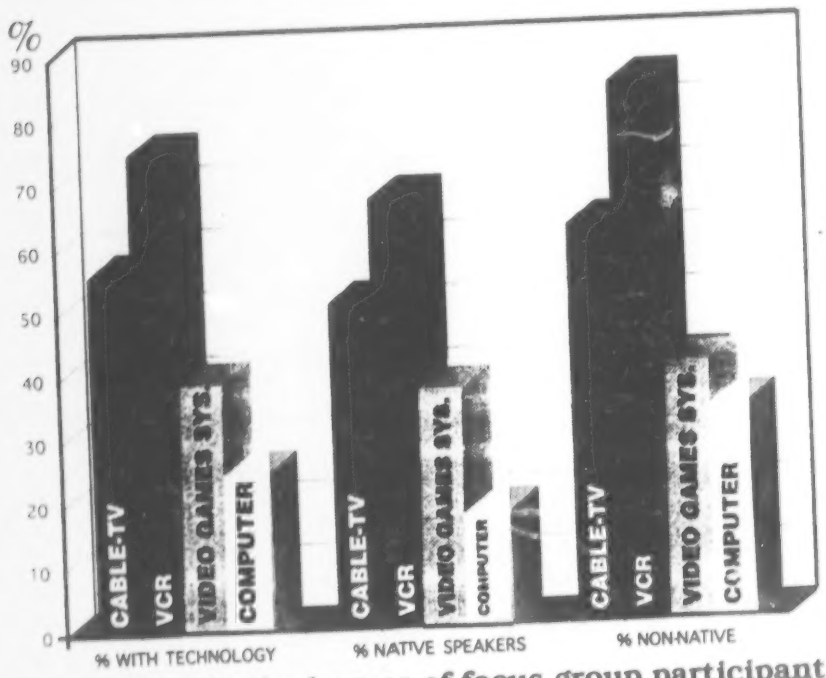
At the Winter Institute on Literacy and Technology at Georgia Tech, researcher Michelle Mobley presented the results of an evaluation of the Satellite Literacy program conducted in 1995. Providing a detailed analysis of the participants in an adult literacy program as compared to the general population, Mobley explained the survey questions which focused strongly on the extent to which TV was a motivator for the students' either enrolling or learning.

The results may be surprising to technophiles, but gratifying to teachers.

The two most consistent factors motivating the students were the quality of the lessons given by the on-air teachers and the on-air teachers themselves. At the local sites, teachers ranked as most important, followed by the lesson content. As earlier research has suggested, the motivating factors are self-improvement and getting educated. The technology or medium is transparent, a means to an end.

Information: Michelle Mobley, PH.D., Corporate Psychology Resources, Bleke & Boyd, 3353 Peachtree Road, #900, Atlanta, GA 30326-1053. Tel: (404) 266-9368.

The Adult Literacy Media Alliance



Technology in the homes of focus group participants

Another project of interest is the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA), a national television and video based adult literacy service being developed by the Education Development Centre, Inc. in New York with support from the Ford Foundation. Between 1994 and 2001, this project will design and produce a series of literacy videos and accompanying print materials for adults at a mid-level of literacy (4 - 8) in need of reading, writing, speaking and mathematics skills.

According to director Marian Schwarz, also presenting at the Georgia Tech Winter Institute on Literacy and Technology, the project is intended to help people become self-directed learners, aware of their own learning strategies. The videos will be distributed through broadcast, cable and satellite media and will reach individuals in their homes as well as in community settings such as post offices, bus stations and health clinics in urban and rural regions throughout the country.

The programming will show viewers how to integrate active learning activities such as keeping a journal, writing poetry, conducting research, filling out applications, and using a dictionary into daily life. There will be innovative ways to support learning opportunities in public places through the use of such devices as billboards, LED displays, e-mail, and electronic kiosks. The project will help local communities create support for viewers by peers, family members, and community networks as well as by existing literacy programs, social service providers, libraries and employers.

ALMA is addressing individuals who want to improve their literacy skills but are unable or unwilling to enter a class or tutorial — approximately 90% of the population in need of literacy instruction: learners who are enrolled in literacy programs who can use the materials to enhance their own learning; community organizations, social service providers, and employers who want to start a literacy program or extend an existing literacy effort; and those who have friends or relatives wanting to improve their literacy skills.

The project designers have been conducting focus groups with learners [See GRAPH] in an attempt to develop appropriate curriculum and programs to meet their needs and interests and fit their media use habits.

They believe that television and video can be harnessed as learning tools to address the problems of access and equity for adults needing to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills.

By next year, materials will be pilot-tested at sites around the US prior to the launch of a three-year demonstration of the full service in four communities in 1997. During the demonstration period, plans for additional production and national distribution of the service will be put in place.

Information: Marian Schwarz, Education Development Center, Inc., The Adult Literacy Media Alliance, 96 Morton Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10014.
Tel: (212) 807-4230;
Fax: (212)633-8804;
E-mail: mschwartz@edc.org

Information technology for learning — dyslexia in adults

The National Council for Educational Technology (NCET) in the U.K. has published a variety of outstanding research documents and reports on educational applications of technology. While their work in schools was a main focus in their earlier years, with particular emphasis on disabilities, they have more recently added adult literacy, workplace and family to the studies undertaken.

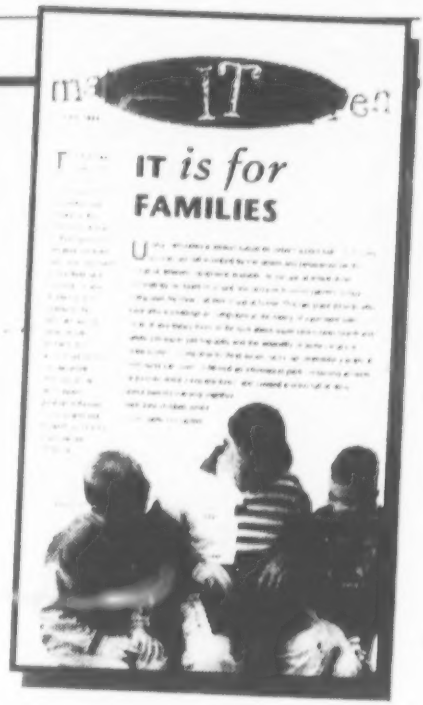
A monograph by Sally McKeown on information technology (IT) for adults with dyslexia gives an excellent overview of both the problem and some of the technology-based strategies now available. Writing with common sense and knowledge, McKeown suggests that teachers and tutors of adults with learning disabilities should stop thinking in terms of remediation for problems that will never disappear and concentrate instead on developing learning strategies. She points out the advantages and drawbacks of various technologies, provides a glossary of terms and lays down a guiding principle — to match needs to appropriate technologies and not assume that technology alone will solve problems.

Parents and children

NCET has also produced documents aimed at helping parents support their children's technological education. Demystifying IT for home use and play, these publications provide simple explanations, suggest ideas and offer evaluations of both hardware and software.

A catalogue of NCET documents is available from the address below. Many of them can be borrowed from The Centre for Literacy. Sally McKeown will participate in the 1996 Summer Institute on Literacy and Technology.

Information: NCET,
Tel: 011-44-1203-416994;
Fax: 011-44-1203-411418
E-mail: Enquiry_desk@ncet.org.uk
World Wide Web server address:
http://ncet.csv.warwick.ac.uk/index.html



Educational technology: U.K.

The National Council for Educational Technology (NCET) is the body established by the [British] government to be the focus of expertise for technology in learning. A government-funded registered charity, NCET researches and evaluates the relevance of new technologies to enhance learning and raise standards in teaching and learning. NCET also promotes and supports effective use of appropriate technologies across all sectors of education.

Source: NCET document 1996

Software Evaluation Service becomes permanent

In February, The Centre for Literacy invited teachers and tutors to book appointments to try out a selection of 55 software products in adult literacy and basic skills. We had acquired these from producers in Canada, the US and the UK, and had expected a positive response, but were overwhelmed by the number of requests.

We were booked every day of the month from morning until closing. We knew from practitioners that many of them do not have access to these materials either because their programs are small or because of the amount of paperwork and legal liabilities involved in getting copies of software. What we did not expect was that many teachers used this as an occasion to try computers for the first time and get a feel for the technology itself.

We were also told that there are not places where teachers can spend extended time trying out resources.

Because of the response, The Centre will be offering this service on a permanent basis and expanding the selection of software.

Call Peggy Killeen at 931-8731, local 1415, or fax 931-5181 to make an appointment.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Poetry lessons for literacy: CONVERSATION POEMS

as conceived by Frances Kazemek and Pat Rigg

Frances Kazemek and Pat Rigg are known for their sensitivity and insight into teaching. Between them, they share years of teaching experience, writing about good practice in adult literacy and basic education. In 1995, they published ***Enriching our lives: Poetry lessons for adult literacy teachers and tutors.*** *In February 1996, they gave a workshop at the International Reading Association's Washington conference on adolescent and adult literacy. Using their concept of conversation poems, they lead participants through the process of creating a poem from an everyday exchange. This segment of* ***In the Classroom*** *is a combination of their workshop material and excerpts from their book, used with permission.*

"[P]oet Carl Sandberg said that people often talk poetry without being aware of it." Kazemek and Rigg want to draw on this natural predisposition to help students make a connection between the language they use and hear every day and that of poetry. They remind us that if we listen to conversations on the bus, in a coffee shop, over our tables, we will hear poetic language. When poetry is demystified, students see that they can create it. Kazemek and Rigg believe that this language awareness is a crucial aspect of being literate and that students who develop it become more attentive listeners and more sophisticated readers and writers. [See BOX 1]

They have created a series of lessons around this idea. One of these is called conversation poetry. As a teacher, you start out by explaining to students what you will be doing together, pointing out that poetry can come from common everyday situations. To illustrate, you can have a group brainstorm ways of saying good-bye or hello and collecting these on the board or on an overhead. Kazemek and Rigg talk about ways of doing this with a class or with a single student being tutored.

After collecting these, ask students to choose the ones they find wittiest or most poetic (Rhythmic and repetitive), and write them on another section of the board or on a piece of paper. Then have pairs of students read them as exchanges: one student reads one line, the other responds. The oral reading is fun and the repetition makes the material even more readable.

Then read a sample poem modeled on a conversation exchange. Kazemek and Rigg use an example from Lorca entitled "Silly Song." Give students the chance to talk to one another about what they think the poem means. Then pair them up and ask them to talk about a conversation they would want to write as a poem.

In the IRA workshop, we talked in triads, until we found a topic of common interest. Then as the conversation became focused, we wrote it down and created a choral exchange. We were amazed at what we generated in only half an hour and might not have believed it possible if we had not experienced it. [See BOX 2]

The facilitators shared a list of source materials for anyone interested in using poetry in literacy/ABE. Condensed from the bibliography in their book, it includes adult collections as well as collections written for children but adaptable for adults. [See p.10]. [L.S.]

BOX 1

Why use poetry with adult literacy students?

Two major reasons:

- They have usually been denied poetry;
- This is what literacy is FOR.

Other important reasons:

Pleasure

Opens our eyes and our minds

Easy to find a wide variety of excellent examples

Meaningful and relevant

Short but complete

Kazemek & Rigg 1996

BOX 2

Workshop exercise on conversation poetry

What strategy did we use for Buddy Write/ Conversation Poetry?

1. We read a catalyst poem, "Answers," and reread it.
2. Small groups shared responses to the catalyst poem.
3. We read other examples of conversation poems —very short.
4. Pairs brainstormed possible topics for their conversation poem.
5. Pairs wrote a first draft.
6. Pairs shared those drafts by reading aloud—a kind of publication.

In class, there is time to re-draft more than once. Final publication may be printing the poem in a collection of class work; it may be carefully inscribing it on clean paper to take home. Everybody writes—teachers too. Nobody marks anyone else's paper.

Resources on poetry -

Paperback anthologies of poetry about work. These are extremely suitable for adults.
Kazemek & Rigg, 1996

Paperwork has the biggest collection; we recommend it highly.

Downie, Glen & Tranfield, Pam., Eds. 1991.*More than our jobs: An anthology* Pulp Press.

Landale, Zoe, Ed. 1985. *Shop talk: An anthology.* Pulp Press.

Martz, Sandra, Ed. 1990. *If I had a hammer: Women's work in poetry, fiction, and photography*. papier-maché press.

Wayman, Tom, Ed. 1991. *Paperwork: An anthology.* Harbour Press.

____1981. *Going for coffee: Poetry on the job.* Harbour Press.

Wharton, Calvin & Wayman, Tom. Eds. 1989. *East of Main: An anthology of poems from East Vancouver.* Pulp Press.

To order:
Harbour Publishing, P.O. Box 219, Madeira Park, B.C. Canada V0N 2H0;

Pulp Press, 986 Homer St. No. 202, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 2W7;

A review of Kazemek & Rigg's *Enriching our lives: Poetry lessons for adult literacy teachers and tutors*, appears in REVIEWS, p. 11.

Enriching our lives can be ordered from IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark DE. 19714-8139, USA.

CINQUAINS

This is another way of bringing poetry into literacy classes. Instructor Beverly Bonner, from the Georgia Tech Satellite Literacy Program in Atlanta, uses a formal structure called cinquains to get students writing short expressive poems about familiar people or objects.

STRUCTURE OF A CINQUAIN

line 1 - one word of two syllables(may be the title)

line 2 - four syllables (describing the subject or title)

line 3 - six syllables (showing action)

line 4 - eight syllables (expressing a feeling or observation about the subject)

line 5 - two syllables (describing or renaming the subject)

STUDENT SAMPLES

Mother
Joyful, playful
Loving, caring, praising
Helping with housework and dinner
Daughter
Dorothy Lyles

Father
Alive, well, short
Happy, dancing, jumping
Getting ready for the holidays
Nice man
Mattie Griffin

Children
Small, short, fat, slim
Playing, running, jumping
Getting ready for Christmas morn
Kiddies
Rosa Hill

Mushroom
Little, round, white
Picking, cooking, eating
Pick up the plant off of the ground
Flower
JoAnne Patillo

Information: Beverly Bonner, Leap (Learning for Everyone...Avenue to Progress) 409 Rees Park, Americus,GA 3170, USA.

VOL 5 No. 4 WINTER 1996

Media FOCUS

THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY

So You've Got Some Media Work from Your Class: Then What?

ASSESSING MEDIA WORK

By Chris M. Worsnop

One of the dreariest things about modern education is that it still asks students to do their work in formats that originated in earlier decades, if not earlier centuries. We teach things like computer technology, and assess how well students have learned it by asking them to write an essay. This is not to say that there is anything inherently wrong with essays, or with writing them; it is merely a plea for students to be allowed to use some more modern, alternative forms to report their learning.

I suspect that one reason teachers hesitate to encourage students to report to them in, say, a video format, is that the teachers feel unqualified to assess work that is not presented in traditional written genres. Fair game!

What we don't know how to assess we are likely to assess poorly; and nobody willingly puts themselves in a position of doing a poor job. Supposing we were able, though, to provide teachers with assessment instruments that would give them the confidence to remove restrictions on reporting format. Would that be enough to change things?

I think it's worth a try. All forms of expression have certain things in common [see BOX below]. These five traits, being universal to all forms of expression, can be described carefully in assessment instruments using language that helps separate good performance from weak performance. These scaled descriptions of levels of performance are referred to as "rubrics."

A lot of work has already been done in developing rubrics for assessing student writing. I have personally been connected with three such major projects since 1992.

A set of rubrics for assessing media work

These rubrics will help all teachers – not just those in media education – in assessing their students' expressive work in video, audio, illustration, music, script or design with instruments that are valid, reliable, authentic and fair.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Common traits of expression

All forms of expression have certain things in common. They all:

- have **content: ideas** and **details;**
- are **organized** in some way;
- use (or do not use) a form of **effective** (media) **language;**
- display (or fail to display) an author's **voice** and awareness of **audience;** and
- demonstrate a degree of **technical competence.**

IN THIS ISSUE

5 **Critical Media in the Information Age: New York City Schools**

7 **News & Notes**

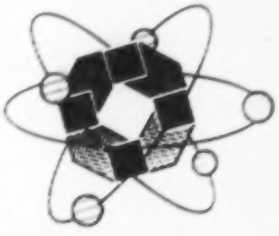
8 **Reviews:** ***Media Education in the Primary School***

Media Focus

is a supplement to **Literacy Across the Curriculum** published four times a year by **The Centre for Literacy, Inc.**
3040 Sherbrooke St. West,
Montreal, Quebec,
Canada, H3Z 1A4
Tel: (514) 931-8731, Ext.1415

Editor
Linda Shohet
Supplement editor
Judy Brandeis
Layout & design
Pon©tu@t!on GRAFIX
(514) 733-6124

The Centre for Literacy – Le centre d'alphabétisation is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide training, research, and information services which promote and link the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace and the community. The Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, and Dawson College.



Literacy for the 21st century

Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

These terms might need to be defined:

Valid: The instrument works by assessing performance traits directly, rather than by assessing other indicators or co-relatives. **The instrument assesses exactly what it claims to assess.**

Reliable: When the same piece of work is assessed – by the same assessor or by different people – using the same instrument a second or third time, the results will be much closer than if the assessors had used individual criteria. **The instrument is consistent in delivering what it claims to deliver.**

Authentic: The things that the instrument claims to assess are the same things that the curriculum claims are important to do, and the use of the instrument does not interfere with good instruction. **The instrument supports good classroom practice.**

Fair: Teachers, students, parents and administrators agree that the rubrics have validity, reliability and authenticity, and therefore have confidence in them and in the results they generate. **People believe in the instrument.**

The rubrics in Assessing Media Work will be:

•**detailed** enough to ensure that reliability is high, and that information students and teachers derive from the assessments is helpful and diagnostic;
•**general** enough that they can be used with many kinds of student expression;
•**adaptable** to local conditions and standards with provision for teachers to suspend parts of the rubric, add emphasis or weight to parts of the rubric or add new sections;
•**accessible**, with training, to teachers, students and parents because of straightforward language and organization; and
•**useful** for assessment, instruction and reporting.

A rubric to assess student response to a text

The rubric could be used to assess a text in writing, video, music, cartoon, photograph, drawing, script etc. The response could likewise be in any medium or format.

Below is an example of a holistic rubric. It is **holistic** because it deals generally with the works as a whole rather than in detail with various separate aspects of it. It is a **rubric** because it uses a scale of six levels to separate various kinds of student response. [Box 2]

A teacher faced with a student response, whatever its format or medium, would be able to apply the descriptors of the six levels to decide what was the best match between the descriptors and the work, that is what level the work should be assigned to.

Traits of expression

Five traits common to all expression are:
- ideas and content
- organization
- effective use of (media) language

BOX 2

Assessment scale for response to media

Level 6
The student integrates personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs with the text. The personal response is rooted in the text, conveys a clear understanding of the whole text and its subtext(s), and makes connections to other texts.

Level 5
The student connects personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs with the text. The personal response refers to the text, conveys a sense of understanding of the text and partial understanding of its subtext.

Level 4
The student explores personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs making only a superficial connection to the text.

Level 3
The student retells or paraphrases the text or identifies devices in isolation making only a superficial reference to personal feelings or experiences.

Level 2
The student response shows little or no interaction with or commitment to the text. The personal response may be weak, unconnected to the text or absent.

Level 1
The student response is irrelevant, incomprehensible or blank.

(c) 1995 Chris M. Worsnop

- voice / audience
- technical competence

It would be a difficult but rewarding task to develop a rubric to describe six levels of performance in each of these traits, or, even better, in various sub-aspects of each trait. Then teachers would be able to do multiple-trait assessment on student work, enhancing many times over all the advantages of rubric assessment.

Let's take the first trait, "ideas and content". The sub-aspects of this trait could be:

- controlling idea
- supporting information and detail
- development

If these sub-aspects are described on the six-level scale, and then the whole trait of Ideas and Content combined into a single rubric, we get a finished product as shown in Box 3.

Developing the remaining four traits with their sub-aspects in the same way will create a detailed rubric to enable teachers to assess confidently on any and all traits with any form of expressive student work.

How do teachers use the rubric?

It's slow at first, so be patient. Those who have tried say that it is worth the effort and the time. They also say that they end up spending less, not more, time assessing student work once they are experienced with the rubrics.

Take a set of student work in media other than writing, and assess each sample *using only the language of the rubric* for Ideas and Content. It is ideal to work with a partner at first. Let's assume that the students have produced story boards. You and your partner will take the first and examine it, then turn to the rubric and decide which level of

How is assigning a level different from assigning a mark?

Assigning a level on a defined scale is different in a number of ways from assigning a mark or a letter grade:

- The level stands for a set of defined descriptors which are shared between the teacher and the student.
- A level assigned automatically tells the student which descriptors are best suited to define the work.
- A level assigned tells the student which levels and descriptors have already been achieved or passed on the scale.
- A level assigned automatically tells the teacher and the student which descriptors are important to strive for in future.
- A level assigned contains real information about the work rather than only a numerical or grade evaluation.
- A level assigned is useful for the teacher as diagnostic information for planning instruction.
- A level assigned has the same meaning each time it is assigned.

BOX 3

A six level scale on Ideas and Content

LEVEL 6 **Consistently exceeds expectations**	Beyond expected range of performance	• Controlling idea is perceptive and insightful • Details (evidence, anecdotes, examples, descriptions, etc.) are exact and add power to the controlling idea. • Development of controlling idea is perfectly clear, complete, coherent and strongly focused.
LEVEL 5 **Consistently meets and may occasionally exceed expectations**		• Controlling idea is thoughtful. • Details are relevant & reinforce the controlling idea. • Development of controlling idea is clear, coherent & well focused.
LEVEL 4 **Usually meets expectations**	Within expected range of performance	• Controlling idea is clear but may not be conventional. • Details are relevant and help expand the controlling idea. • Development of controlling idea is fairly clear, focused and generally coherent.
LEVEL 3 **Inconsistently meets expectations**		• Controlling idea is apparent but may be simple or derivative. • Details are generally relevant and help clarify the controlling idea to some extent. • Development, focus and coherence of the controlling idea are clear in parts.
LEVEL 2 **Does not meet expectations**	Not yet within expected range of performance	• Controlling idea is indiscernible, sketchy, plagiarized. • Details are few & weakly connected to controlling idea. • Development of controlling idea, where it can be discerned, is weak.
LEVEL 1 **Not present**		• Controlling idea is absent or must be inferred. • Details are sparse, disconnected or irrelevant. • Not applicable

descriptors best describes the ideas and content in the piece of work you are looking at. If you can find two or more descriptors at the same level that describe the piece well, you have found the level for that trait. (With the full rubric covering all five traits, you repeat this exercise for each of the remaining four traits and end up with five separate assessments for each piece of work, each assessment describing a separate trait within the work.)

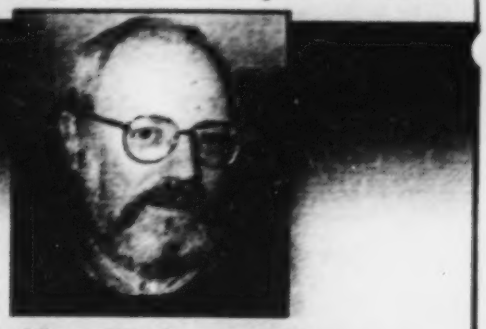
It's important at first to work with at least one colleague as you become familiar with the details within the rubrics and with the processes involved in using them. If you try to do it alone at first, you will take up more time and run the risk of getting frustrated. Once you are familiar and comfortable with the rubrics yourself, you should take them into class and introduce them to the students. A good exercise is to cut up sets of rubrics and have students work in groups to recreate them like a jigsaw. Students will learn to use the traits as they assess their own and each other's work, and as they prepare their work.

It is also important to say that the rubric for assessing media work can assess only the student's performance. It cannot be used to infer any information about the student's ability, motivation, process of working or any other abstraction or inner state that is not directly available in the text itself. Different instruments are needed for this kind of assessment, examples of which will appear in Assessing Media Work.

[Chris Worsnop, author of Screening Images, is currently working on a book called Assessing MediaWork, which will give teachers assessment instruments to use with confidence. It will contain the full rubrics as well as suggestions and cautions about possible pitfalls in assessing with rubrics not included in this article. Chris will facilitating a workshop at The Centre for Literacy on Friday, April 26, 1996]

© notice This article and the sample rubrics contained in it are copyright, © 1996, by Chris M. Worsnop, and are not to be reproduced or disseminated in any way without permission from the author. Contact Chris Worsnop via email at <worsnop@pathcom.com>

SCREENING IMAGES
Chris Worsnop Turns Theory to Practice



Media Education isn't Hard to Teach

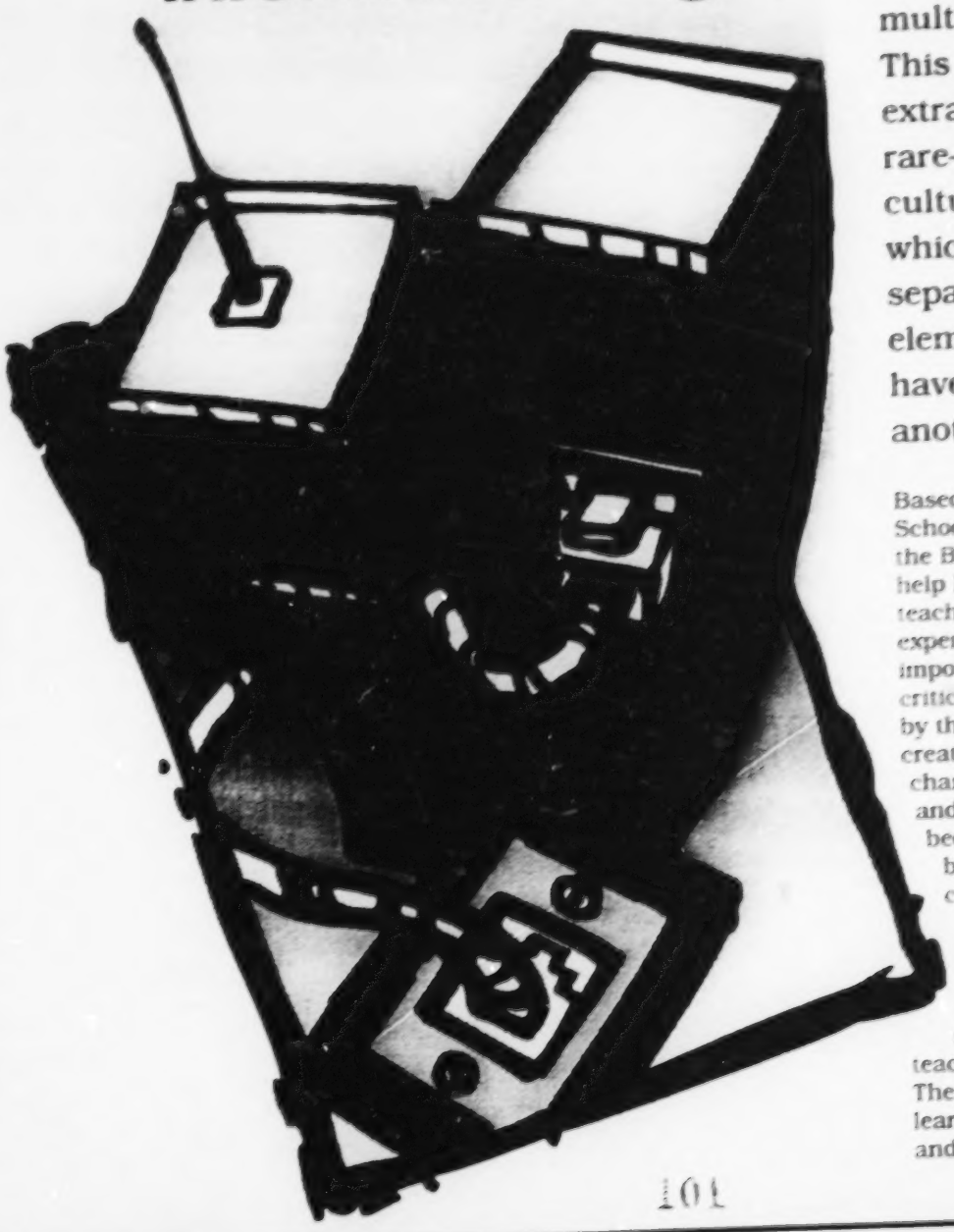
Friday, April 26, 1996
The Centre for Literacy
Cost: $85
(Includes lunch and materials)

Information: Peggy Killeen
Tel. (514) 931-8731 Ext. 1415
Fax (514) 931-5181
E-mail: literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca

Prime Time Parent

A reminder that "Prime Time Parent," a kit designed for use by parents, is also a valuable tool for teachers interested in promoting media education in the classroom. Activities in the kit can be adapted for students of all ages. "Prime Time Parent" is available at The Centre for Literacy and may be borrowed for two weeks. Borrowers are asked to leave a $10 deposit which is refunded when the kit is returned.

New York City's public schools get support for critical media use in the information age



The Media Workshop New York (MWNY) is a unique project which recognizes that there are links between literacy, the mass media and telecommunications/ multimedia technology. This is quite extraordinary—and rare— in academic and cultural environments which persist in separating these three elements as though they have no bearing on one another.

Based in a Manhattan Junior High School, the project was funded by the Bertelsmann Foundation to help New York City's public school teachers gain knowledge and expertise in teaching students important skills and habits of critical media use. MWNY is driven by the premise that teachers can create the "gateway to change." This change is deeply rooted in current and newer digital media which are becoming increasingly pervasive, both at home and in the classroom.

In order to meet the needs of students who are immersed in these media, the MWNY stresses the important role of teachers in all curriculum areas. These teachers, however, must first learn and practice the media skills and habits that are so crucial to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

101

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

expanding notions of literacy in the information age.

Creating habits of mind

The people at MWNY believe that because all media — traditional mass media as well as new digital technologies — call upon new skills to complement traditional skills, our classrooms and our teachers must be better informed than many currently are. Although people readily accept the fact that students—and their parents — are as likely to turn to TV or to some other media for information as they are to turn to traditional texts, we rarely stimulate student discussion of these pithy media texts. Their familiarity lends richness to the learning experience and makes them an untapped potential for the classroom.

It is the MWNY's strong belief that the role of the teacher in this process is to help students practice using these critical thinking skills and develop criteria for determining what is "reliable" information and "effective" and "coherent" form. The project serves as an excellent model for preparing today's students to be better able to interact with the media and information so that they will function as autonomous and empowered citizens.

Tensions and opportunities

Project administrators and facilitators at MWNY are realistic about where they now find themselves with the project. They report some interesting outcomes as well as some tensions. While levels of sophistication about technology among teachers has improved in some cases, other teachers have assumed a more pronounced protectionist attitude than they originally had. In other cases, teachers are disappointed because they have come into the project with unrealistic expectations about the technologies. MWNY acknowledges these varying reactions and hopes to achieve some compromise and perhaps a common language. They clearly understand the importance of striving for something more than excessive protectionism or excessive enthusiasm.

Unavoidable tensions are rooted in the fact that Bertelsmann is a German foundation and for Germans, media education is not new. They, and other Europeans, are now dealing with technological integration and the issues it raises. Europeans are working towards preparing teachers and students for the 21st century. MWNY is

Habits of mind

This term is used by MWNY to describe the new skills now required of students to become effective citizens in the information age. Not entirely different from traditional notions of critical thinking skills, "habits of mind" encourage students to ask pointed questions about information.

- What is the source of the information?
- What form does it take?
- How does the form shape my understanding?
- How does it serve or not serve my purposes?
- What point of view is present?
- What information is left out?

"Education that makes use of popular media takes advantage of students' deep immersion in their forms, codes and conventions. The in-depth learning and excitement that come from closely examining and, especially, producing video and newspaper stories is missed. For students to be literate today, the camcorder and the multi-media computer, as well as the pen and the book, are crucial literacy tools that must be mastered."
—MWNY

necessarily influenced by this definite shift in emphasis from media education to technology integration; however, too often it does not reflect the American reality.

Other tensions surround the program as well. Despite the fact that the grant was sizable, the money is nearly gone. Problems of content continue to be an on-going battle, as MWNY must meet the needs of teachers at all levels of pedagogy. The issue of access is an overwhelming one. Another set of tensions is related to the original intent to combine media education and technological integration. It now seems that this idea is fraught with contradictions.

MWNY feels that networking all schools is an important goal. However, this will not solve all the problems in education. It is also necessary to remember that interesting things can happen without huge changes in the infrastructure. (JB)

For information about MWNY, contact Melissa Philips, Media Workshop, New York.
Tel. (212) 229-1776
Fax (212) 229-1942

NEWS & NOTES

National and international conferences

Workshops
David Buckingham, London University
Making Media: Students as Media Producers
Springboards '96
Friday, April 19, 1996
Ramada Hotel, Longueuil, Quebec
Cost, (Includes lunch): Friday only. Member, $110. Non-member $140. Student rates available.
Information: Mr. John Ryan
Tel. (514) 670-3030
David Buckingham will do two half-day sessions and review the place of practical production of media education in the classroom. He will discuss examples of secondary school students' work in the U.K. and consider relationships between practical work and critical media analysis.

Curriculum 2000
Education and the Moving Image
May 1 - 2, 1996
The National Film Theatre and Museum of the Moving Image
BFI South Bank, London, England
The British Film Institute in association with The Times Educational Supplement will host a two-day conference which aims to set a new agenda for the relationship between schools and the media in the age of digital technologies.
Information: Jacintha Cusack, Curriculum 2000, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 2LN.
Tel. 0171-255 1444
Fax 0171 580 8434

The power to grow – Linking Technology and learning
Date: Saturday, May 11, 1996
Time: 9:00 - 16:00
Place John Abbot College
Ste-Anne-De-Bellevue
Information: Sherrill Douglas
Tel: (514) 682-3870
Fax: (514) 682-5950

Third Annual Graduate Seminar in Media Literacy
June 18 - 22, 1996
University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio
Seminar Leaders: David Considine, Dan Suffoletto, Fran Trampiets
Teachers, parents, school administrators and anyone else interested in our media environment and its impact on society are invited to attend.
Information: Fran Trampiets, The University of Dayton, 300 College Park, Dayton, OH 45469 0314
Tel. (513) 229-3160
Fax (513) 229-3130, E-mail: Trampiet@trinity.udayton.edu

REVIEWS

Media Education in the primary school

by Carol E. Craggs
Routledge (London, England), 1992. 170 pp

Interest in media education does not seem to be at its peak currently in Canada, and this raises concern among teachers still committed to the subject. One cause for their concern is the availability — or lack — of current and relevant resources for use with students. Given that getting media education into the classroom has been such a struggle, we have not been inundated with useful, practical materials for students and teachers. And when we do find media education materials, it is generally for use at the secondary rather than at the elementary (primary) level.

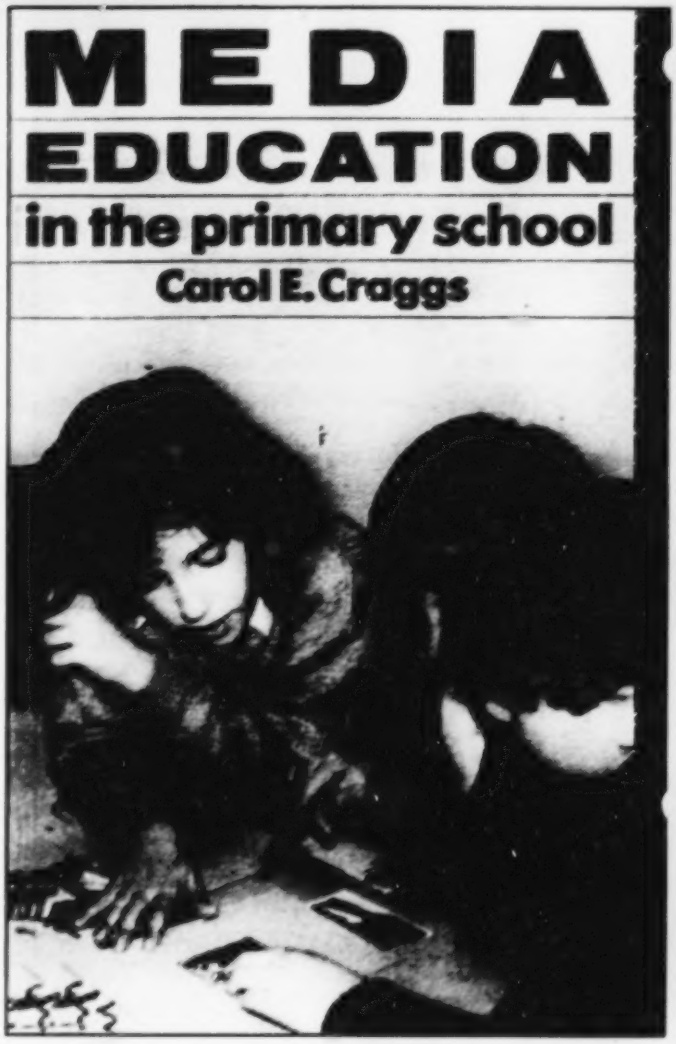
Fortunately, however, one is still able to discover valuable resources, and *Media Education in the primary school* is one of these. Written by British teacher Carol E. Craggs, the book is intended for teachers in that country who teach to National Curriculum requirements. However, this does restrict its use to teachers in England. The author grounds activities in theoretical frameworks familiar to most media education enthusiasts in all countries. As a result, both the activities and the theory are quite universal.

The book is an excellent resource for teachers with varying levels of interest in media education. For those new to the subject, the Introduction and the first chapter provide a framework for the practical activities which follow. The Introduction is brief—only eight pages—but it is used to advantage to make some lucid arguments for promoting media education and situating it across the curriculum.

The book is an excellent resource for teachers with varying levels of interest in media education.

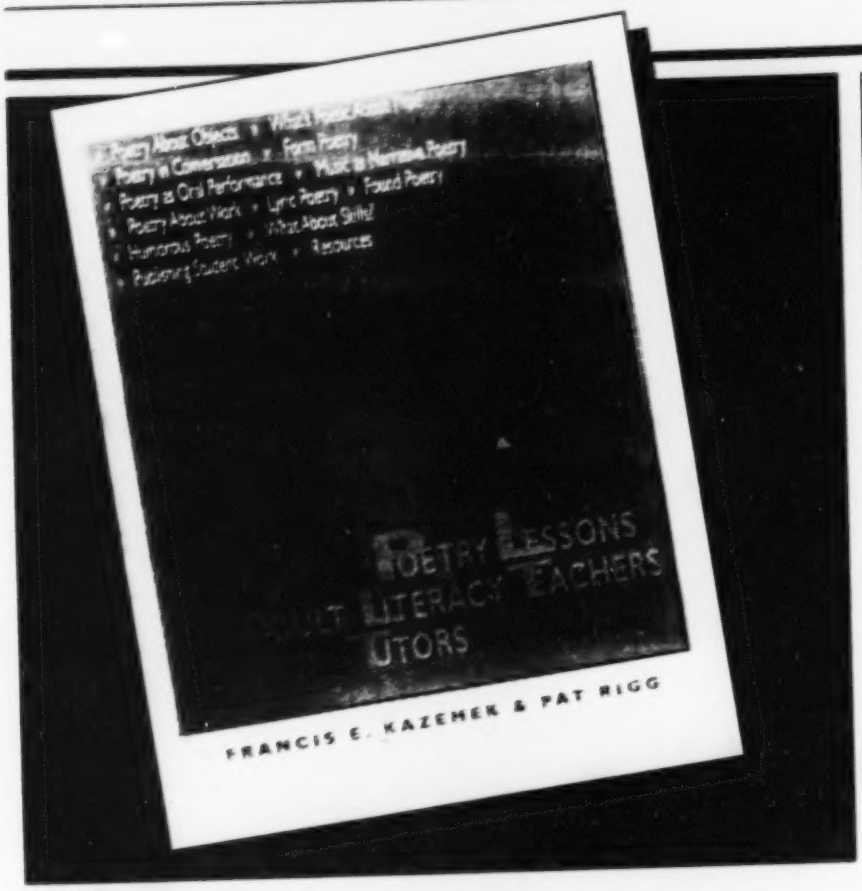
Chapter 1, entitled "Starting Points," gives a cogent historical overview of media education. Ms. Craggs also identifies and discusses what she considers to be four key issues of media education at the primary level: Selection and construction; A sense of audience; Representations of reality; and Narrative techniques.

In Chapters 2 - 6, the tone shifts and the book becomes a practical handbook of activities which can be used as presented, or adapted by teachers to their own needs. Each chapter deals with a topic, including visual literacy, news, advertising, representations of reality and media institutions — all relevant to the study of the media; the Canadian teacher will have to make only slight alterations in references to networks and programs.



The activities are presented in a clear, practical manner. It is perhaps because the author is herself a teacher that she has a true sense of what works well in the "real" world of the classroom. Craggs often writes in the first person from her own experience describing the activities exactly as she has presented them to her students. The personal approach is the most convincing for teachers looking for tried and true measures. Many activities are accompanied by worksheets, photographs and graphics which complement the task and add to the practical character of the book. (JB)

Media Education in the primary school is available at The Centre for Literacy.



Enriching our lives:
Poetry lessons for adult literacy teachers and tutors

by Frances Kazemek and Pat Rigg. IRA. 1995.

This handbook of nine lessons is written for teachers of adult basic education classes and tutors of single students who believe that poetry enriches our lives and gives us an awareness of language that is central to literacy.

From their collective teaching experience, Kazemek and Rigg have distilled a series of lessons: poetry about objects, poetry in conversation, form poetry, poetry as oral performance, music as narrative poetry, poetry about work, lyric poetry, found poetry, and humourous poetry. These lessons can be as short as 45 minutes or can be expanded to run for several meetings or classes.

Kazemek and Rigg start from an understanding of literacy as functional, that is always having a purpose, and as social, that is never happening without reference to others — we talk about what we read, we write to get information or respond to an argument, we communicate. They believe that poetry is appropriate for the most basic of literacy students and they share with teachers all they know about using it to make learning pleasurable.

They incorporate a chapter on skills — spelling, grammar, punctuation— and when to address them, and they include a chapter on computers and word processors. They also discuss publication and offer a bibliography of resources [See In the Classroom, p. 9].

A must-add under "P" on the bookshelf. [L.S.]

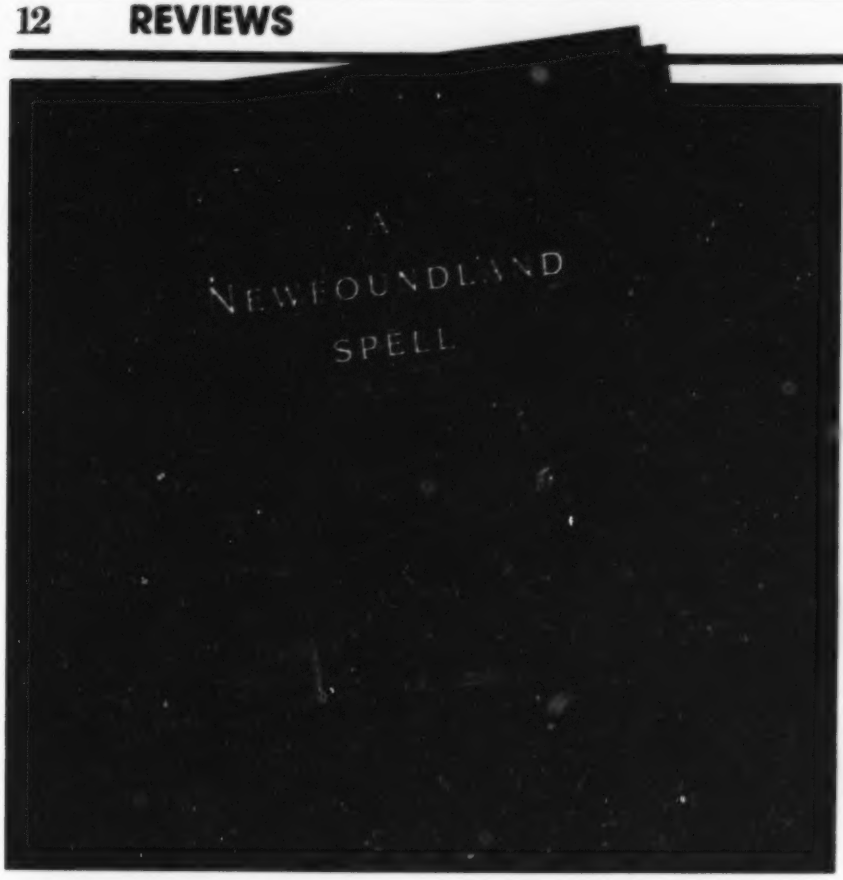
Selecting literature for adult beginning readers

One of the difficulties encountered in teaching adults to read is the lack of availability of appropriate reading materials. Frequent concerns are that while literacy geared towards adults may be too difficult for adults who are learning to read, literacy geared towards children or adolescents may not be suitable for adults or may be regarded as demeaning. However, this may not necessarily be the case.

Linda Thistlewaite (1995) has written a very helpful article for those involved in adult literacy education in which she discusses the appropriateness of children's books for adult readers. The article includes a scale which can be used in evaluating the appropriateness of children's books for adult readers. It also includes a scale which can be used in evaluating the appropriateness of individual books based on the relevance of the themes expressed, ability to go beyond traditional middle class values and situations, the appeal of the artwork to adult readers, the extent to which the main characters are adults, and the ease of reading. In addition, Thistlewaite discusses other issues in the selection of adolescent literature for adults and books written expressly for adults of lower reading ability. Finally she makes suggestions for asking questions that invite dialogue about any reading material.

Reprinted from *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 39:3, November 1995, p. 251

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



A Newfoundland Spell

edited by Helen Woodrow
Harrish Press, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1995.

The Dictionary of Newfoundland English describes a "Newfoundland spell" as a rest from the tedium of one kind of work by a change to another, according to Helen Woodrow who facilitated the project that produced this collection of writings from basic education students.

In the context of social and economic upheaval that has resulted from the depletion of the Newfoundland fisheries, these students have gone back to school to train for new jobs which do not yet exist and which some residents doubt ever will. [See To Ponder, p. 4]. Woodrow invited people from adult education programs to create writing workshops in seven coastal communities steeped in the island's language and culture: the 140 participants who joined have discovered the power of finding their voices and making them heard. In a brief Foreword, Woodrow documents the process of making the book.

This collection of stories, essays and poems reflects the lives of people trying to transform themselves through learning, grappling with economic uncertainty, family pressures, personal anxiety, conflict of values, but hanging on and looking ahead [see BOXES].

When I first saw the title, I thought it referred to a magic spell cast by the writers. Even

The Inshore Fishery

by Dean Willis

...It was July 9, 1992 when the government closed down the fishery because the fish stocks were low. All the fishermen had to take in their gear and wait for the government to see what they were going to do about the fish. Now we are on the fishing package, waiting for the government to tell us to start fishing again.

Some of us have done nothing since then and some of us are in school training for a better job. But there are lots of people out there looking for work and finding nothing to do. Does the government think the fishermen are going to take jobs away from some other poor people when there is nothing for them to do?

If the old people could come back from their graves, they would not believe there is no fish to catch.

You Can Do It

by Glenys Spurrell

Nervousness, stress and fear
Going back to school
Thirty-five, with two children and no job.

I ask myself
What will people think?
What about my family?
Can I do it?

But then it really doesn't matter
what other people think
I am doing this for myself.
My family is well supportive

I am in control,
I am setting my own pace.
I feel better with myself after going back.

Don't let your worries and fears
get the best of you.
Yes, you can do it.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Slacker
by Thomas Pierce

When he quit school at age
sixteen
to work at the local fish plant
his friends ridiculed him
calling him slacker
too lazy to learn.

Fifteen years later
when he took leave from work
to return to school
his friends once again ridiculed
him
calling him a slacker
too lazy to work.

Six years and two degrees later
his friends call him Boss.

Struggling In Desperate Times
by Paula Elliott

I'm struggling all alone
with my pen in hand
I see beauty and wonder
I see poverty and despair
mixed feelings and emotions
all bottled up in one body.

Write, you say
make it known, tell everyone
when I find the words
I shall.

Afraid Of Going Back To School
by Darlene Snook

When I was a little girl going to school, I was not very smart. I was a slow learner. When I knew I had a test the next day I would study for it, but soon after I closed the book I would forget everything. I used to fail my tests a lot, but the teachers were not helpful at all. They didn't sit down with me and explain what I was doing wrong. When the end of the year came around for the report cards, they always put me ahead a year. It was like that until I was fifteen years old.

Then I quit school.

I was out of school for a year and I started to look for work. After a while I got a job in the fish plant. It was better than going to school. I worked there for eight years. Then they closed the fishery and I ended up on The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy Program (TAGS). I had to go to school or lose my money. It was a big decision for me to make because I was afraid that school was going to be the same as before. I asked myself, "What will the teachers be like?" I made up my mind and decided to go back. I started in October and school is not what I thought it would be.

after knowing what it actually means, I haven't abandoned my first impression. Its power lies partly in the close connections among the writers, the topics and the current realities in Newfoundland. Their situation, for all its particularity, is typical of that in many places today where old ways and jobs are disappearing, and where education is being promoted or forced on people as the solution to problems that are socially and economically determined.

Few collections of student writing have such coherence. Kazemek and Rigg recommended this book in a recent workshop on poetry and basic education [See In the Classroom, p.9]. [L.S.]

Information: Adult Basic Education Writing Network, c/o Educational Planning and Design Associates, 18 Leslie St., St. John's, NF, A1E 2V6.
Tel: (709)753-8815;
Fax (709) 753-8856; E-mail: Helen_Woodrow@porthole.entnet.nf.ca

PUBLICATIONS

DRAWING:
A link to Literacy

Stunning drawings and moving texts on social and personal issues that touch us all – war, race, love, AIDS, pollution – produced by college students.

To order a copy send a cheque for $10.00 plus $3.00 shipping & handling.

Cheque is payable to The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, H3Z 1A4.

Information on special price for multiple copies: (514) 931-8731, local 1415.

Resources are catalogued and may be borrowed in person or by mail (postage covered by the borrower). Documents should be requested by number. Documents can be consulted in The Centre from Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

In addition to the materials listed in the catalogue, we have directories of program and services, bibliographies on many subjects, international periodicals and newsletters, catalogues of learning materials, tapes/videos, and hanging files. We are connected to the National Adult Literacy Database and Internet.

Printouts on specific subject headings can be requested at cost.

Information: Peggy Killeen (514) 931-8731, local 1415; literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca.

The resources listed in this bibliography were selected by Liz Black at The Georgia Tech Satellite Literacy Program for participants in the Winter Institute on Literacy and Technology co-sponsored in Atlanta by Georgia Tech and The Centre for Literacy in January1996. A detailed review of this body of research was given by David Kring.

Beder, Hal. Basic Concepts and Principles of Marketing. In H. Beder (Ed.) ***Marketing Continuing Education***. (pp. 3-17). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Beder, Hal. Reaching the hard-to reach adult through effective marketing. In G. Darkenwald(Ed.). ***Reaching Hard-to reach Adults***. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 1980.

Beder, Hal. Reaching ABE students: Lessons from the Iowa study. ***Adult Literacy and Basic Education***. 14(1990):1-17.

Beder, Hal. Reasons for Non-participation in Adult Basic Education. ***Adult Education Quarterly,*** 40(1990):207-218.

Beder, Hal & Thomas Valentine. Iowa's Adult Basic Education students:Descriptive profiles based on motivations, cognitive ability, and sociodemographic variables.

Beder, Hal & Thomas Valentine. Motivational profiles of Adult Basic Education students. ***Adult Education Quarterly,*** 40 (1990):78-94.

Boshier, Roger & John Collins. The Houle Typology after twenty-two years: A large-scale empirical test. ***Adult Education Quarterly,*** 35 (1985):113-130.

Bova, Brenda. Participation patterns of ABE students: Implications for classroom strategies. ***Adult Literacy and Basic Education,*** 9 (1985): 95-105.

Darkenwald, Gordon. Comparisons of Deterrents to Adult Education Participation in Britain and the United States.

Darkenwald, Gordon & Thomas Valentine. Factor structure of deterrents to public participation in adult education. ***Adult Education Quarterly***. 35 (1985):177-193.

Hayes, C. & Gordon Darkenwald. Participation in basic education.: Deterrents for low-literate adults. ***Studies in Education of Adults***. 20 (1988):16 -28.

Martindale, Cameron & James Drake. Factor structure of deterrents to participation in off-duty adult education programs. ***Adult Education Quarterly,*** 39 (1989):63 -75.

Quigley, Allan. ***Retaining reluctant learners in adult literacy programs: A multivariate analysis***. Pennsylvania State University College of Education. (1993).US Dept of Education PDE Contract No. 98-3036.

Quigley, Allan. ***Understanding and Overcoming Resistance to Adult Literacy Education***. Pennsylvania State University College of Education, Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy. 1992.

Scanlan, Craig. ***Deterrents to Participation: An Adult Education Dilemma.*** ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, Information Series No.308. 1986.

Scanlan, Craig & Gordon Darkenwald. Identifying deterrents to participation in continuing education. ***Adult Education Quarterly***. 34 (1984):155-166.

Further information on the topic
All selections are available at The Centre for Literacy. To contact Liz Black: Tel: (404)894-9087 or (800)428-7323.
E-mail:liz.black@arch.gatech.edu
To contact David Kring,
Tel: (915) 944-8233; E-mail: 71554.1221@compuserv.com

Literacy & health: an annotated bibliography

This list of articles from the past five years contains access information and full summaries. Available for $5 to cover printing and mailing.

Make cheques payable to

The Centre for Literacy 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, H3Z 1A4, Canada.

Sample bibliography: Health and literacy

Title: **Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine: A Shortened Screening Instrument**

Source: Family Medicine 25(6): 391-5 June 1993

Summary:
Due to increased awareness of the link between literacy and health, tests have been developed to assess the literacy level of patients in order to determine their needs in terms of health care information. An analysis of 'REALM,' a quick, efficient, and easy-to-administer literacy test is provided within this paper. 'REALM' was found to be a valid and reliable instrument with practical value as a rapid estimate of patient literacy and as an additional tool to address the health care needs of low-literacy patients.

Title: **Fotoplatica: An Innovative Teaching Method For Families With Low Literacy and High Stress**

Source: Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing 1993, vol. 10, no.3: 112-4

Summary:
An overview of Fotoplatica which is, in this case, pictorial posters used to explain procedures and pain experienced during cancer treatment. The target group for this experiment was illiterate Latino families whose children have cancer. The method was found to be extremely effective in creating a higher level of understanding and in decreasing anxiety.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chronological Conference Listing Local

SPRINGBOARDS '96
"Creating Community"
April 18 - 19, 1996
Montreal, QC
Information: SPRINGBOARDS '96, Judith Schurman, 133 Union Boulevard, Saint Lambert, QC, J4R 2M7.
Tel: (514) 935-6357;
Fax: (514) 935-1099

National/International

The Conference Board of Canada 3rd International Partnership Conference: Business and Education Working Together
April 13 - 16, 1996
Toronto, ON
Information: Helen Zurawski, Conference Board of Canada, 256 Smyth Road, Ottawa, ON, K1H 8M7.
Tel:(613) 526-3280;
Fax: (613) 526-4857; e-mail: zurawski@conferenceboard.ca

International Symposium on Teaching & Learning College Reading & Learning Association
April 18 - 20, 1996
Kananaskis, AB
Information: Dorothy H. Gray, Division of Arts and Science, Grant MacEwan Community College, 10700 - 104th Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5J 4S2.
Tel: (403) 497-5347
Fax: (403) 497-5353

Fifth Annual National Conference Family Literacy: Opportunities in the Midst of Change
April 21 -23, 1996
Louisville, KY
Information: National Center for Family Literacy.
Tel: (502) 584-1133

6th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women
April 22 - 26, 1996
Adelaide Australia
Information: Festival City Conventions, P.O. Box 986, Kent Town, South Australia 5071.
Tel: 61-8 363 1307;
Fax: 61-8 363 1604

Canadian Teachers' Federation Women in Education Central Regional Symposium
"Keeping Equity on the Agenda"
April 26 - 28, 1996
Aylmer, QC
Information: Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, ON, K2P 1B4.
Tel: (613) 232-1505;
Fax: (613) 232-1886

41st Annual Convention International Reading Association
April 28 - May 3, 1996
New Orleans, LA
Information: Division of Research, IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139.
Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226; Fax: (302) 731-1057

Workplace Learning: The Strategic Adventure & National Workplace Literacy Program
April 29 - 30, 1996
Milwaukee, WI
Information: Workplace Learning Conference, Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 964 Educational Sciences Building, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53791-9505
Tel: 1-800-446-0399

Inkshed 13: The Changing Faces of Literacy
Annual Working Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning
Gull Harbour Resort, MN
Information: Pat Sadowy,
Tel: (204) 474-9043;
Fax: (204) 269-4261; E-mail: sadowy@bidgeduc.lan1.manitoba.ca

Computers in Adult Literacy Eighth Annual Conference
May 7, 1996
Drexel University
Philadelphia, PA
Information:
Maria Alaia, (215) 895-6872 or
Terry Martell, (215)685-6602

Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE)
May 16 - 18, 1996
Pittsburgh, PA
Information: Judy Aaronson,
Tel: (412) 481-9005;
Fax: (412) 481-3668

Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE) & Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE)
June 6 - 8, 1996
Winnipeg, MN
Information: Dr. Bill Kops, 188 Continuing Education Division, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MN, R3T 2N2, Tel: (204) 474-6198; E-mail: kops@cedcampus.Lanl.umanitoba.ca

Wyoming Conference on English: Theory, Pedagogy, and Everyday Life
June 18 - 21, 1996
University of Wyoming
Information: Kathy Evertz,
Tel: (307) 766-6486;
Fax: (307) 766-3189

Feminist Women's Writing Workshops
July 1996
Geneva, NY
Information: Director, FWWW, PO Box 6583, Ithaca, NY 14851,
E-mail: pipkit@aol.com

International Reading Association 16th World Congress on Reading
July 9 -12, 1996
Prague, Czech Republic
Information: 1-800-336-READ, ext. 216

New England Alliance for Computers and Writing
Third Annual Conference
July 11 - 12, 1996
Salem State College
Salem, MA
Information: Rick Branscomb, Department of English, Salem State College, Salem, MA 01970,
E-mail: ebranscomb@mecn.mass.edu

International Whole Language Umbrella Conference
"Celebrating Literacy"
August 1 - 4, 1996
St. Paul, MN
Information: Tel: (612) 255-4887;
E-mail:
umbrella96@tigger.stcloud.msus.edu

Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Annual Summer Conference
August 1 - 4, 1996
Oxford, OH
Information: Charles Shuster, Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA.

Adult Literacy and Technology Ninth Annual Conference (ALT)
August 2 - 3, 1996
Chicago, IL
Information: Illinois Secretary of State Literacy Office, 431 S. Fourth Street, Springfield, IL 62701.
Tel: (217) 785-6927;
Fax: (217) 524-3529; E-mail: jgordon@library.sos.state.il.us

Northeast Whole Language Conference
August 11 - 14, 1996
Johnson State College
Johnson, VT
Information: John Thomas Poeton, 32 Plateau Drive, Barre, VT 05641.
Fax: (802) 479-3235;
E-mail: JPOETON@aol.com

2nd International Conference NCTE (US), US Department of Defense Dependents Education, The National Writing Project, NATE (UK)
"Global Conversations on Language and Literacy"
August 12 - 14, 1996
Heidelberg, Germany
Information: NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana , IL 61801-1096

Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada
11th Biennial Conference
July 31 - August 4, 1996
Information: Capital Region Centre for the Hearing Impaired (CRCHI).
Tel: (613) 729-1467;
TTY: (613) 729-6189;
Fax: (613) 729-5167

Society for Literature & Science 1996 Annual Meeting
October 10 - 13, 1996
Atlanta, GA
Information: Anne Balsamo, School of Literature, Communication & Culture, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA 30332-0165

1996 European Writing Conferences
of EARLI Special Interest Group Writing and Computers Association
October 23 - 25, 1996
Barcelona, Spain
Information: 1996 European Writing Conferences, Institute of Educational Sciences, University of Barcelona, Edifici de Migdia, Pasco Vall d'Hebron 171, 08035 Barcelona, Spain, or EARLI SIG WRITING,
Liliana Tolchinsky,
Tel: 34(3) 428 2142 ext 3384;
Fax: 34(3) 402 1016;
E-mail: SIGWRITI@TRIVIUM.GH.UB.ES

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)
1996 Adult Education Conference
October 30 - November 2, 1996
Charlotte, NC
Information: AAACE, 1200 19th Street, NW, Ste. 300, Washington, D.C. 20036,
Tel: (202) 429-5131;
Fax: (202) 223-4579

College Reading & Learning Association
October 30 - November 3, 1996
Albuquerque, NM
Information: Tel: (303) 556-3057;
Fax: (303) 556-2159;
E-mail: ORLANDOV@MSCD.EDU

1996 Ontario Council of Teachers of English, Communications and Language Arts (OCTECLA)
"New Changes for the 90s Teacher"
October 31 - November 1, 1996
Toronto, ON
Information: Alex Bostock, Notre Dame Catholic High School, 12 Malvern Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4E 3E1, Tel: (416)393-5501;
Fax: (416) 393-5631

Second International Conference on Women and Literacy
November 1 - 3, 1996
Atlanta, GA
Information: Joanne Nurss
The Center for the Study of Adult Literacy, Georgia State University,
Tel: (404) 651-2405;
Fax: (404) 651-1415

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
86th Annual Convention
November 21 - 24, 1996
Chicago, IL
Information: NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana , IL 61801-1096

International Reading Association
42nd Annual Convention
May 4 -7, 1997
Atlanta, GA
Information: IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE, USA 19714-8139,
Tel: (302) 731-1600, ext 226;
Fax: (302) 731-1057.

The Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking
has announced its 1995-96 series of workshops and conferences. Topics include: Writing to Learn, Writing and Thinking, Writing to Learn Math and Science, Teaching Women's Writing , Arguing Differently, and more...
Information: Bard College, P.O. Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, USA 12504-5000, Tel: (914) 758-7484.

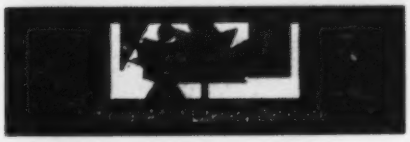
Summer Institutes 1996

Computers in Writing-Intensive Classrooms
June 17 - 28, 1996
Michigan Technological University
Houghton, MI
Facilitators: Dr. Cynthia Selfe & Dr. Gail Hawisher
Information: Conference Department, Michigan Technological University, 1400 Townsend Drive, Houghton, MI 49931-1295, Tel: (906) 487-2263.
E-mail: dkbasto@mtu.edu

Literacy BC Summer Institute
July 15 - 26, 1996
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, BC
Information: Mary Thompson Boyd,
Tel: (604) 684-0624

WPA Summer Workshop for Writing Program Administrators
July 29 - August 1, 1996
Miami University
Oxford, OH
Information: Charles Shuster, Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, milwaukee, WI 53201, USA.

The Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking July 1996
has announced its 1996-summer workshops: Topics include: Writing to Learn, Writing and Thinking, Writing to Learn Math and Science, Teaching Women's Writing , Arguing Differently, Visual Thinking, and more...
Information: Bard College, P.O. Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, USA 12504-5000, Tel: (914) 758-7484.



National Adult Literacy Database NALD

The National Adult Literacy Database has moved to Fredericton, New Brunswick, where it has been housed in a turn-of-the-century home on a tree-lined street only a block away from the provincial legislative building and the Beaverbrook Art Gallery.

NALD is now serving the Canadian literacy community on the World Wide Web providing information on activities, resources, programs, grants and connections to literacy servers around the world.

NALD has created web pages for several national organizations and for many provincial coalitions and organizations.

Information: Charles Ramsey,
Tel: (506) 457-6900;
Fax: (506) 457-6910;
E-mail: info@nald.ca;
WWW: http://www.nald.ca

Call for Papers 2nd Annual Conference on Women and Literacy

November 1 - 3, 1996
Atlanta, Georgia
The conference is organized into three topic areas: Research, Practice, Policy. Papers should address literacy issues specific to women. Papers with an international perspective are encouraged.
Information: (404) 651-2405

The Centre for Literacy

announces its new website: http://www.nald.ca/litcent/

Keeping up with professional materials when you don't have time

Adult educators, especially in literacy and ABE, argue about many things, but they agree that most of them do not have enough time to keep up with professional books and journals which carry the latest ideas in the field.

Enter a group of teachers at the Office of Academic Affairs at the City University of New York(CUNY) who have started a project to bring readable reviews of current books and articles to the community of adult literacy practitioners.

The result is ***Teachers Reading. Reviews by and for Adult Educators,*** a small journal which has invited interested teachers, administrators and counselors to write reviews in a conversational style "avoiding jargon and references that may not be familiar to most" practitioners. They have chosen to represent a broad range of subjects from various disciplines and relating to students of all ages.

The staff at ***Teachers Reading***, hope the materials will be used for ongoing professional development, and suggest forming reading groups or bringing single articles to a staff meeting. They invite users to share other ideas. Readers are welcome to photocopy the reviews with acknowledgment. At the end of each issue is a page listing publishers' telephone numbers for the works reviewed.

To order ***Teachers Reading*** or to become a reviewer, contact: Dr. Leslee Oppenheim or Dr. J. Michael Parker, Office of Academic Affairs, City University of New York (CUNY), 535 E. 80th Street — 4th Floor, New York, NY, 10021, USA;
Tel: (212) 794-5437;
Fax: (212) 794-5706.

Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation 1996 Grants

The Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation, an initiative of the Book and Periodical Council, aims to make adult literacy a high profile issue and to help non-profit community literacy groups develop materials for adult learners and their teachers.

The Foundation is offering two types of grants in 1996:

• Seed Grants of up to $2500 to non-profit community literacy groups to develop an idea, perform a needs assessment and create a working sample of a project. This grant will enable groups to begin the process of creating literacy materials with adequate support for the task.

• Production Grants of up to $5000 to non-profit community literacy groups to produce materials for adult learners and their teachers. Applicants must submit a working sample of the materials.

Criteria and application forms available from Donna Lunau, Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation, 35 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON, M5R 2S9,
Fax: 416-975-1839.
Deadline: June 26, 1996

Call for Papers 18th Conference International Council for Distance Education (ICDE)

"The New Learning Environment: A Global Perspective
June 2 - 6, 1997
Pennsylvania State University
Information: Janet Patterson, (814) 863-5127; Fax: (8140 863-5190;
E-mail: ICDE 97@cde.psu.edu.
Deadline: July 15, 1996

Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities (ALLD)

The National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center, supported by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) in Washington, has excellent resources for practitioners on all aspects of this issue. ALLD has just announced a home page on the LINCS World Wide Web site (http://novel.nifl.gov). Once there,

• under Publications, you can access the newsletter, LINKAGES, state resource sheets and 1-800 numbers of resources for literacy and L.D.
• under Hot Topics, you can find *Adults with Learning Disabilities: Definition and Issues. Screening for Adults with Learning Disabilities: The Role of the Practitioner in the Assessment Process.* and *Techniques: Working with Adults with Learning Disabilities.*
• under About the NALLD Center, you get background information and Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities (ALLD) Forum/listserv allows you to read the daily exchanges on the listserv.

If you need help in accessing the site, contact Jaleh Behroozi at NIFL, (202) 632-1506.
To reach the NALLD Center by mail or phone, contact Eve Robins, NALLD Center, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, 9th floor, Washington, DC 20009-1202. Tel: (202 884-8185; Fax: (202) 884-8422.

Organization addresses & numbers with new web sites:

- **Movement for Canadian Literacy**
  458 McLaren Street,
  Ottawa, Ontario,
  K1R 5K6
  Tel: (613) 563-2464;
  Fax: (613) 563-2504;
  E-mail: mcl@magi.com

  WWW site:
  http://www.synapse.net/cursys/mcl.htm

- **National Adult Literacy Database (NALD)** — has a new home at 703 Brunswick Street,
  Fredericton, N.B.,
  E3B 1H8
  Tel: (506 457-6900;
  Fax: (506) 457-6910

  WWW site:
  WWW: http://www.nald.ca

Women and computer-mediated communication

A Selected bibliography of published research on women and computer-mediated communication has been compiled by Lori Collins-Jarvis, Assistant Professor, Department of Communications at Rutgers University, 4 Huntington Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08903,

E-mail: Jarvis@Zodiac.Re

discussions about feminism. It also appears in Thomas Benson (ed), Special issue of the Electronic Journal of Communication, 3 (2).

McGill University Writing Seminar Series,

New Perspectives on Genre and Communication Winter-Spring 1996

WHAT NOVICE ENGINEERS LEARN FROM COMMON ENGINEERING GENRES.
April 12, 1996
Dorothy Winsor, GMI Engineering and Management Institute

PREPARING WRITERS FOR TRANSITIONS IN THREE PROFESSIONAL FIELDS: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, ENGINEERING, SOCIAL WORK
April 26, 1996
Christine Adam, Natasha Artemeva, Carleton University;
Ann Beer, Anthony Paré, McGill

All sessions on Fridays, 9:30 -11:30, in Faculty Lounge, Room 233, McGill Faculty of Education, 3700 McTavish, Tel: 398-6960

LET'S TALK

NATIONAL FORUM ON HEALTH

National Forum on Health Workbooks

The National Forum on Health was launched in October 1994, chaired by the Prime Minister, with 24 members chosen for thier expertise and unique perspective. Their mandate was to find ways to improve the health of Canadians and the efficiency and effectiveness of health services.

They have organized themselves into four working groups around themes or issues: Determinants of Health, Evidence-based Decision Making, Values, and Striking a Balance.

In addition to studying current knowledge and practice, the Forum is consulting the Canadian public through a series of events and activities. One of these initiatives is a workbook called "Let's Talk...about out health and health care" It provides some clear explanations of the four issues being explored and then asks respondants to fill in answers to pertinent questions and return them to the Forum.

Recognizing that many Canadians have difficulties with reading and writing for a variety of reasons, the Forum has created an audiotape with the questions and will mail it and a blank tape for response to any Canadian who calls and requests it. A teacher, tutor or friend may request one on behalf of anyone who does not wish to be identified.

If you know of anyone who would like to particpate in this survey, please contact Christel Burke at 1-800-661-8437 (outside Ontario). In Ontario, please call 905-660-1060. All answers must be received by April 30, 1996.

For information: National Forum on Health, P.O. Box 2798, 4th Floor, 200 Kent Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6H4,
Tel: (613) 941-5950;
Fax: (613) 954-0947;
E-mail: forum@hpb.hwc.ca;
www: http//www.hwc.ca:8200

The Centre for Literacy in cooperation with Georgia Institute of Technology

P R E S E N T S

literacy, learning, and technology

SUMMER INSTITUTE 1996

CURRENT THINKING, NEW DIRECTIONS.

June 26 - 28, 1996, Montreal, Quebec

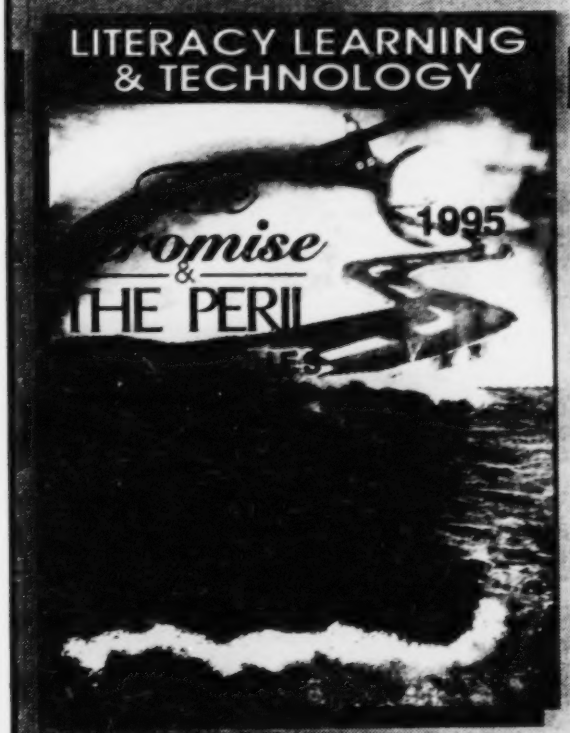
Topics include teacher training, teacher support; technology for basic skills in the workplace; and technology for disabilities —physical and learning.

Participants and presenters from Canada, the United States and the U.K.

BROCHURES AVAILABLE

Information: Peggy Killeen, The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, Canada, H3Z 1A4, Tel: (514) 931-8731, ext 1415; Fax: (514) 931-5181;
E-mail: literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



An overview of the 1995 Institute

Includes short articles on various applications of technology in adult literacy focusing on the promise and the peril.

Includes Ontario Literacy Communications Project, STAPLE, Georgia Tech Satellite Literacy Project, New Reading Disc and more.

Cost: $10 plus $3 postage and handling, includes GST. Make cheques payable to: The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, QC, Canada, H3Z1A4.

To subscribe, complete this form and mail it with your cheque to:
The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3Z 1A4

I enclose a cheque for ❑ $16 ❑ $80 ❑ $150 **(Please mark choice)**

Make cheque payable to The Centre for Literacy.
On multiple orders outside Montreal, please add $5.00 additional postage.

Name: _____

Institution: _____ Dept: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Single annual subscription	**$16**
Multiple annual subscription (10)	**$80**
Multiple subscription (20)	**$150**

Back issues available

For special prices on institutional subscriptions of 100 or more, call (514) 931-8731, ext. 1415

Literacy Across the Curriculum

is published four times during the academic year by The Centre for Literacy